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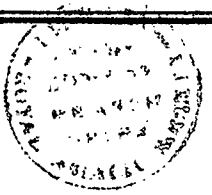

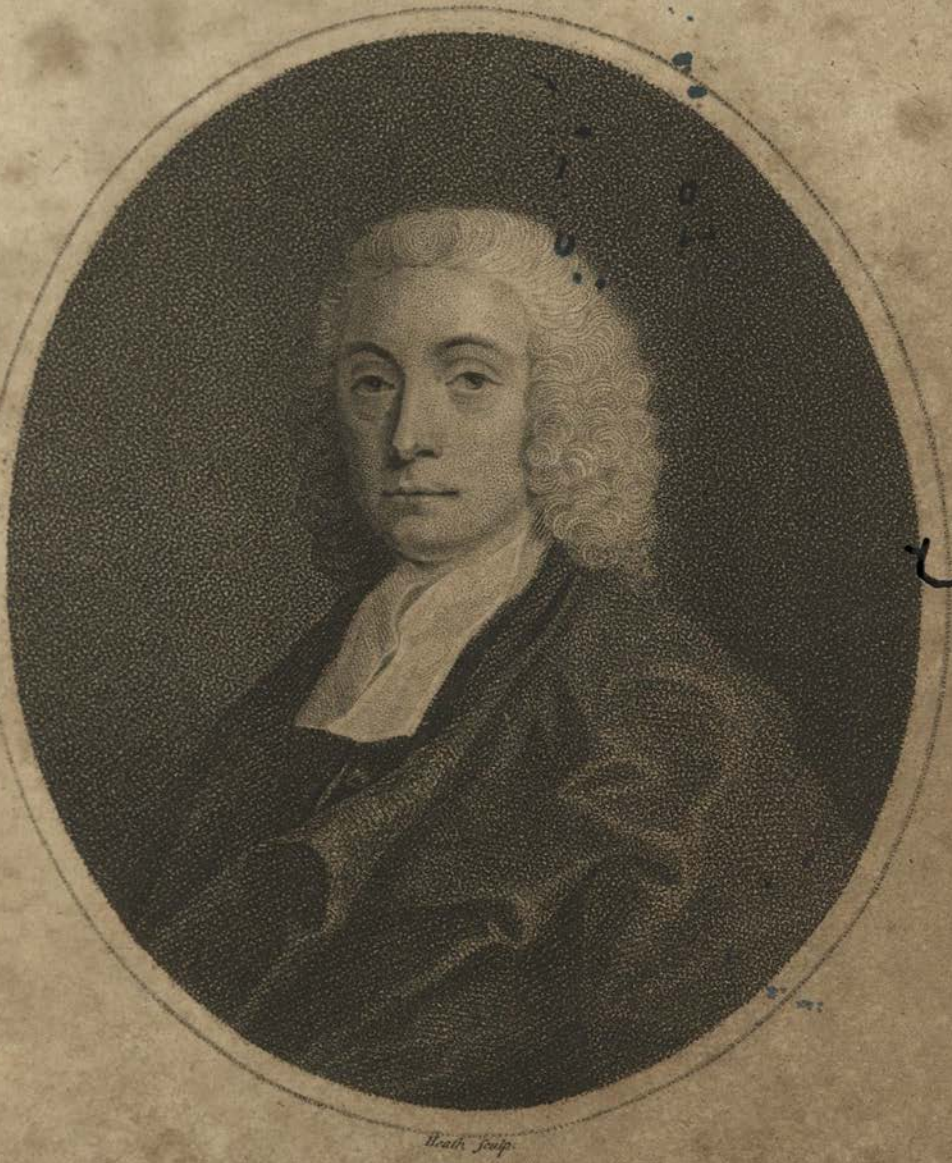

Heath Sculp.

PHILIP DODDRIDGE D.D.

born June 26, 1702

THE

FAMILY EXPOSITOR:

OR, A

PARAPHRASE AND VERSION

OF

THE NEW TESTAMENT;

WITH CRITICAL NOTES,

AND A PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENT OF EACH SECTION.

BY

PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D.D.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

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VOL. I.

CONTAINING THE FORMER PART OF

THE HISTORY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST,

AS RECORDED BY THE FOUR EVANGELISTS.

DISPOSED IN THE ORDER OF AN HARMONY.

TENTH EDITION—CAREFULLY CORRECTED.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY ANDREW KIPPIS, D.D. F.R.S. AND S.A.

Ει δε τις υπο τεθων μη ωασχη των λογων, υπο μονων αν τωνεν αδε δικασηριων υπευθυνθειη. SIMPLIC. in EPICTET. Proem.

LONDON:

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THE LIFE

OF

DR. DODDRIDGE.

THE family from which Dr. DODDRIDGE descended, appears to have been originally settled in Devonshire. No memoirs of it, however, are capable of being traced farther back than to his great great grandfather, whose name was Richard, and who was an eminent merchant at Barnstaple in that county. Of his great grandfather we are not told whether he was a gentleman who lived upon his estate, or whether he was of any particular profession. That the family was ancient, is evinced by its arms; and that it was of some consequence, is apparent from the liberal education, and the respectable situations, of such of the members of it as have not been consigned to oblivion. John Doddridge, brother of the Doctor's great grandfather, was of no small distinction in the law; passed through several eminent stages of it, in the reign of King James the First; received the honour of Knighthood; and at length arose to be one of the judges of the Court of King's Bench. An account of him will be found below.*

* This John Doddridge, one of the sons of the Richard Doddridge above-mentioned, was born at Barnstaple, in the year 1555. In 1572 he was entered at Exeter College, Oxford, where he studied four years, after which he was removed to the Middle Temple, London, where he became a great proficient in the law, and a noted counsellor. In the forty-fifth year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, he was Lent Reader of that house; and on the twentieth of January 1603-4, he was called to the degree of Serjeant at Law. At the same time he had the honour of being appointed Serjeant to Henry Prince of Wales. From

Another John Doddridge, (whether a son, or only a near relation of the Judge, cannot now be ascertained,) was likewise brought up to the same profession; and became a Coun-

this employment he was raised, in the succeeding year, to be Solicitor-General to the King; though his name does not occur, under that capacity, in Mr. Beatson's Political Index. On the twenty-fifth of June 1607, he was constituted his Majesty's Principal Serjeant at Law, and was knighted on the fifth of July following. In February 1612-13 he was created Master of Arts, at his Chambers in Serjeant's Inn, by the Vice-Chancellor, the two Proctors, and five other members of the University of Oxford. This peculiar honour was conferred upon him in gratitude for the great service he had done to the University, in several law-suits depending between the city of Oxford and the said University. On the twenty-second of April 1613, Sir John Doddridge was appointed one of the Judges of the Court of King's Bench, in which office he continued till his death. In this station he appears to have conducted himself with great integrity as well as ability. However, in April 1628, he and the other Judges of the Court were called upon to assign their reasons in the House of Lords, for having given judgment against admitting five gentlemen to bail, who had been imprisoned for refusing the loan which had lately been demanded by the crown. Sir Nicholas Hyde, Lord Chief Justice, Sir John Doddridge, Mr. Justice Jones, and Mr. Justice Whitelocke, each of them spoke upon the occasion, and made the best defence which the nature of the case would admit. If they were guilty of a mistake, which cannot now reasonably be doubted, they seem to have been led into it in the sincerity of their hearts, from the high notions they entertained of regal power. Sir John Doddridge, in his speech, asserts the purity of his own character in the following terms: "It is no more fit for a "Judge to decline to give an account of his doings, than for a Christian of his "faith. God knoweth I have endeavoured always to keep a good conscience; "for a troubled one who can bear? I have now sat in this court fifteen years, "and I should know something. Surely, if I had gone in a mill so long, dust "would cleave to my clothes. I am old, and have one foot in the grave: "therefore I will look to the better part as near as I can. But *omnia habere in "memoria, et in nullo errare, divinum potius est quam humanum.*" Sir John Doddridge departed this life on the thirteenth day of September 1628, in the seventy-third year of his age, and was buried in the ambulatory before the door of the library, formerly called Lady Mary's Chapel, in the cathedral church of Exeter. Within that library is a very sumptuous monument erected to his memory, containing his figure and that of his wife, cut in alabaster, under a stately arch supported by marble pillars. This learned judge, by his happy education, accompanied with excellent natural parts and unremitted industry, became so general a scholar, that it was said of him, that it was difficult to determine whether he were the better artist, divine, civil or common lawyer. Among his other studies, he was a great lover of antiquities, and attained to such an eminence of knowledge and skill in that department of literature, that he was regarded as one of the ablest members of the famous Society of Anti-

sellor of the Middle Temple, Recorder of Barnstaple, and a Member of the long Parliament. From a circumstance related concerning him, of his being secluded from the house, with some other members, in December 1648, because certain matters were to be debated concerning them, there is reason to believe that he might be obnoxious to the then ruling party, on account of his not being willing to concur with them in all their measures.* Philip Doddridge, an uncle of the Doctor's, was also bred to the law, and discharged, for many years, the important trust of steward to the noble and wealthy family of Russel, under William the fifth Earl, and first Duke of Bedford. Our author's grandfather,

quaries, which may be said to have begun in 1571, but which more particularly flourished from 1590 to 1614. The following works were written by Sir John Doddridge. 1. "The Lawyer's Light, or a due Direction for the Study of the Law." London, 1629, quarto. 2. "A complete Parson, or a Description of Advowsons and Church Livings, delivered in several Readings, in an Inn of Chancery called the New Inn." Printed 1602, 1603, 1630. quarto. 3. "The History of the Ancient and Modern Estate of the Principality of Wales, Duchy of Cornwall, and Earldom of Chester." 1630, quarto. 4. "The English Lawyer, a Treatise describing a Method for the managing of the Laws of this Land, and expressing the best Qualities requisite in the Student, Practiser, Judges, &c." London, 1631. quarto. 5. "Opinion touching the Antiquity, Power, Order, State, Manner, Persons, and Proceedings, of the High Courts of Parliament in England." London, 1658, octavo. 6. "A Treatise of particular Estates." London, 1677, duodecimo. Printed at the end of the fourth edition of William Noy's Works, entitled, "The Ground and Maxims of the Law." 7. "A true Representation of fore-passed Parliaments to the View of the Present Times and Posterity." This still remains in manuscript. Sir John Doddridge also enlarged a book called the "Magazine of Honour." London, 1642. The same book was afterwards published under his name by the title of "The Law of Nobility and Peerage." London, 1657, 1658, octavo. In the Collection of curious Discourses written by eminent Antiquaries, are two Dissertations by our Judge; one of which is on the Dimensions of the Land of England, and the other on the Office and Duty of Heralds in this country.†

† Collection of curious Discourses written by eminent Antiquaries, Vol. II. p. 432, [illegible] Ibid. Vol. I. p. 40—42, 163—167. Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses, Vol. I. Col. 515, 520. Beatson's Political Index, Vol. I. p. 409. Parliamentary History, Vol. VIII. p. 1—8.

* Collection of Curious Discourses written by eminent Antiquaries, Vol. II. p. 432. Wood's Athenæ Oxonienses, Vol. I. Col. 518. Whitelock's Memorials, p. 360.

whose name was John, was educated for the church, in the University of Oxford, and was possessed of the rectory of Sheperton, in the county of Middlesex, from which he was ejected on the twenty-fourth of August 1662, in consequence of the act of uniformity. At that time he had ten children unprovided for; notwithstanding which, he quitted a benefice that was worth two hundred pounds a year, rather than he would violate his conscience, by submitting to the subscriptions and declarations required, and the usages imposed by that act. Dr. Calamy has recorded concerning him, that he was an ingenious man, a scholar, an acceptable preacher, and a very peaceable divine. From his funeral sermon, it appears that he had preached, in the latter part of his life, to a congregation at or near Brentford, and that he died suddenly, 1689, much respected and beloved by his people.*

Daniel Doddridge, the Doctor's father, was brought up to trade, and settled as an oilman, in the city of London. Being the eldest surviving branch of the family, he was heir at law to the large estate of the Judge, (about two thousand pounds a-year,) and was often urged by his friends to pursue the recovery of it, but he chose to decline doing it, from an apprehension of the hazard and expence that would attend the attempt. He had a great number of children, all of whom died young, excepting one daughter, and our author. The Doctor was the last and twentieth child of his father's marriage. His mother was the daughter of the Reverend Mr. John Bauman, of Prague, in Bohemia; who, in consequence of the troubles which followed the expulsion of Frederic, Elector Palatine, left his native country about the year 1626. Such was his adherence to the Protestant religion, that, for the sake of enjoying the free exercise of it, he quitted all his friends, and the possession of a considerable estate. He withdrew on foot, in the habit of a peasant, carrying with him nothing but a hundred broad pieces of

* Orton's Memoirs of the Life, Character, and Writings, of the late Reverend Philip Doddridge, D. D. p. 1—4, second edition. Calamy's Abridgement, Vol II. p. 466.

gold, plaited in a leathern girdle,* and a Bible of Luther's translation. Having spent some time at Saxe-Gotha, and in other parts of Germany, he came to England, in what year is uncertain, with ample testimonials from many of the principal German divines. Being thus strongly recommended, he was made Master of the Free-School at Kingston-upon-Thames, at which place he died, leaving behind him one only child, the daughter before mentioned, then very young.

Dr. Philip Doddridge was born in London, on the twenty-sixth of June 1702. So destitute was he, at his birth, of the signs of life, that he was thrown aside as dead. One, however, of the attendants, thinking that she perceived some motion or breath in him, cherished with such assiduous care the almost expiring flame of existence, that it was happily preserved, for the benefit of the world. From his infancy young Doddridge had an infirm constitution, and a thin consumptive habit, which rendered both himself and his friends apprehensive that his life would be short. He frequently was accustomed therefore, especially on the returns of his birth-day, to express his wonder and gratitude that his years were so long continued. His parents, whose cha-

* Mr. Bauman, the first night after he commenced his journey, left his girdle behind him at the inn in which he lay; and not being used to such a cincture, he did not miss it till he came to another inn the next evening. Upon this he immediately went back to his former lodgings, with the united painful apprehension of being met by pursuers, and of not having the good fortune to recover his substance. When he arrived at the inn, he inquired of the chamber-maid if she had seen a girdle which he had left in his chamber. She informed him that she had seen it, but that, imagining it to be of no value, she had thrown it away, and could not recollect where. After having told her that he had a great value for his old belt, that it would be very useful to him in the long journey he had before him, and that he would handsomely reward her for finding it, she searched diligently, and at length found it in a hole under the stairs, where the family used to throw their worn out useless furniture. The good man received his girdle with great joy, and pursued his journey with thankfulness to Providence for the recovery. This event he often spoke of to his friends, as an extraordinary and seasonable mercy.†

† Orton's Memoirs of the Life, Character, and writings of the Reverend Philip Doddridge, D. D. p. 4, 5, note, second edition.

racter was worthy of their birth and education, brought him up in the early knowledge of religion. Before he could read, his mother taught him the history of the Old and New Testament, by the assistance of some Dutch tiles in the chimney of the room where they usually sat; and accompanied her instructions with such wise and pious reflections, as made strong and lasting impressions upon his heart. His first initiation in the learned languages was under Mr. Stott, a minister, who kept a private school in London. In 1712, when he was ten years of age, he was removed to Kingston-upon-Thames, and placed at the school which had been taught by his grandfather Bauman. Here he continued till 1715, and distinguished himself by his piety and his diligent application to literature. On the seventeenth of July, in the same year, he had the unhappiness of losing his father; and he had been deprived of his mother some time before. This circumstance of his being left an orphan, excited in him very serious reflections, which, however, were not wholly of a gloomy nature; for he expressed a devout, and even a cheerful trust in the protection of the God of Mercies, the universal Parent of mankind.

About the time of his father's death, Mr. Doddridge quitted Kingston, and was removed to a private school at St. Alban's, under the care of a worthy and learned master, Mr. Nathaniel Wood. At this town he had not only the advantage of receiving excellent instruction, but was peculiarly happy in forming an acquaintance with a gentleman to whom he owed the highest obligations, and who behaved to him with the kindness of a parent. The gentleman we speak of was Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Samuel Clark, the dissenting minister of the place. What rendered Mr. Clark's regard and protection particularly seasonable, was a calamity that befel Mr. Doddridge with respect to his private fortune. By the mismanagement of the person into whose hands the care of his affairs had been entrusted after his father's death, he lost the whole of his substance. In this melancholy situation, he found a ready benefactor in Mr. Clark; and had not Provi-

dence raised him up such a generous friend, he could not have proceeded in the course of his studies.

During Mr. Doddridge's residence at St. Alban's, he began to keep a diary of his life; from which it appears how diligently he improved his time, and how anxious he was to be daily advancing in knowledge, piety, virtue, and usefulness. As he had the Christian ministry in view, besides his application to the languages, he read, every morning and evening, portions of Scripture, with some commentary upon them; and it was very seldom indeed, that he permitted either his school-business, or any avocations or amusements, to divert him from this course. He recorded the substance and design of the sermons he heard, together with the impressions which they made upon him, and particularly noted what was most worthy of imitation in the preacher. In these important concerns he had the singular felicity of enjoying the direction of so kind and experienced a friend as Mr. Clark. Under the instructions, and by the encouragement of the same gentleman, he was admitted to the Lord's Supper; and his own reflections on the occasion, preserved in his diary, amply shew the seriousness of his spirit in that early part of life.

In the year 1718, Mr. Doddridge left the school at St. Alban's, and retired for a time, to his sister's house,* with a view of considering his future profession. Strong as the bent of his inclination was to the ministry, he had little prospect, from the narrowness of his circumstances, of being able to carry his wishes into execution. Whilst he was in this state of suspense, the Duchess of Bedford, who had a regard for his family, hearing of his situation and character, and of his warm inclination to study, made him an offer,

* His sister was married to Mr. John Nettleton, a dissenting minister at Ongar, in Essex. She was a lady distinguished by her good sense and piety, and by the patience and tranquillity with which she bore some heavy afflictions. Her brother always behaved to her with the utmost tenderness; and even while at the academy, and in his first settlement, generously contributed all that he could spare out of his small stock for her assistance.†

† Orton, ubi supra, p. 4, note.

that, if he chose to be educated for the church of England, and would go to either of the Universities, she would support the expences of his education, and afterwards provide for him, if she should live till he had taken orders. This proposal he received with the highest gratitude, but declined it in the most respectful manner, as he could not satisfy his conscience in complying with the terms of ministerial conformity. In the distress of his mind, from an apprehension that he should not be able to accomplish what was so near to his heart, he waited upon Dr. Edmund Calamy, a divine of great eminence among the dissenters at that period, and entreated his advice and assistance towards his being brought up for the ministry. But in this application he met with no encouragement. The Doctor endeavoured to dissuade him from his design, and urged him to betake himself to some other profession. Disheartened by so many obstructions and difficulties, he at length entertained thoughts of entering upon the study of the law, in which design he was encouraged by Mr. Horseman, a celebrated conveyancer, who recommended him to Mr. Eyre, a counsellor, from whom he received such good proposals, that he was on the point of complying with them. However, previously to his final determination, he devoted one morning solemnly to seek God for direction; and whilst he was actually engaged in this pious exercise, the postman knocked at the door with a letter from Mr. Clark, containing an offer to take him under his care, if he chose the ministry upon Christian principles. With what thankfulness he embraced the offer, will appear from his own words in his diary. "This," says he, "I look upon almost as an answer from "heaven; and, while I live, shall always adore so seasonable "an interposition of divine Providence. I have sought "God's direction in all this matter, and I hope I have had "it. My only view in my choice hath been that of more "extensive service; and I beg God would make me an in-"strument of doing much good in the world."*

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 4—12.

Mr. Doddridge returned to St. Alban's in consequence of Mr. Clark's proposal, and continued some months at the house of that generous friend, who directed him in his studies, furnished him with proper books, and laboured to cherish religious dispositions and views in his heart. In October 1719, he was placed under the tuition of the Reverend John Jennings, who kept an academy at Kibworth, in Leicestershire, and was a gentleman of great learning, piety, and usefulness. Mr. Jennings was the author of "Two Discourses on Preaching Christ, and particular and experimental Preaching," first printed in 1723, which were so much esteemed, that they were recommended by two bishops at their visitations of their clergy, and translated into the German language, by order of Dr. Frank, Professor of Divinity, at Hall, in Saxony. A second edition of them appeared in 1736, under the care of Mr. Jennings's brother, Dr. David Jennings, who was for many years an eminent minister and tutor in London. Mr. John Jennings published likewise, "A Genealogical Table of the Kings of England, Scotland, and France, for the space of nine hundred years." Under the tuition of this gentleman, for whom Mr. Doddridge had the highest veneration and respect, he prosecuted his studies with the greatest ardour and diligence. Besides attending and studying the academical lectures, and reading the particular parts of the authors to whom his tutor referred his pupils for the farther illustration of the subjects treated upon, he had in one half year read sixty books, and about as many more afterwards in the same proportion of time. Some of these were large volumes, such as Patrick's Commentaries, Tillotson's Works, and most of the sermons that had been preached at Boyle's Lecture. All the rest were learned or useful treatises. Nor was it in a hasty or desultory manner that these books were read by him, but with great attention and close study. Several of them he abridged, and from others he made extracts, which were inserted in his common-place book; and when he found in any of the works perused by him, a remarkable interpretation or illus-

tration of a text of scripture, he transferred it into his interleaved Testament or Bible.*

It was of eminent advantage to Mr. Doddridge, that, during the whole of his academical course, he enjoyed the correspondence of Mr. Clark. From such of this gentleman's letters as have still been preserved, it appears, that his advices to his young friend, whether regarding his religious or literary improvements, were signally wise and judicious.† It was probably in conformity with the exhortations of Mr. Clark, that Mr. Doddridge made it his business to increase his acquaintance with classical learning. The more immediate objects of his attention were the Greek writers. These he not only read with care, but wrote observations upon them, for the illustration of the authors themselves, or of the scriptures; and he selected such passages as might be serviceable to him in his preparations for the pulpit. His remarks upon Homer, in particular, were so numerous, that they would make a considerable volume.‡ This part of Mr. Doddridge's conduct is justly entitled to commendation. By forming his taste upon the great models of antiquity, to which he added an acquaintance with the polite writers of his own country, he acquired an ease and elegance of stile which he would not otherwise have attained. His merit was the greater in this respect, as few of the Dissenters had hitherto cultivated the graces of composition, and perhaps not many of them had excelled even in the perspicuity and correctness of their language. It is desirable that the cause of truth, piety, and virtue, should come recommended with every possible advantage.

While Mr. Doddridge was thus laying up a large store of solid and ornamental knowledge, he was equally intent upon cultivating the excellencies of the Christian character. For this purpose he drew up some rules for the regulation of his temper and conduct, which he inserted in the beginning of his interleaved New Testament, that, by a frequent review of them, they might have the greater influence on the whole

* Ibid. 12—14. † Letters to and from the Reverend Philip Doddridge, D. D. p. 1—14.

‡ Orton, ubi supra, p. 14.

of his behaviour. They are very strict; and perhaps more strict than can ordinarily and universally be put into practice; but the effect of them was happy on himself, and an attention to them might be signally useful to others, who have the same views in life.* In the year 1722, Mr. Jennings removed, with his pupils, from Kibworth to Hinckley, at which place Mr. Doddridge, after having been previously examined by a committee of ministers, and received an ample testimonial to his qualifications, preached his first sermon. This was on the twenty-second of July in that year. As he was but little more than twenty years of age, his friend Mr. Clark, seemed rather apprehensive that he had begun to preach too soon; but he acquiesced in the judgment of his tutor, grounded on the maturity of Mr. Doddridge's abilities.† From his first appearance in the pulpit, he was remarkably acceptable in the places where he exercised his talents. After continuing to pursue his studies another year, he accepted of an invitation from the congregation of Dissenters at Kibworth. At the same time he had an application from the city of Coventry, to be assistant to Mr. Warren. Mr. Clark gave the preference to the last offer, for several judicious reasons; notwithstanding which, Mr. Doddridge, upon mature deliberation, made choice of the former situation. His principal motives for so doing were his youth, and the opportunity of pursuing his studies with little interruption. It was in June 1723, that he settled at Kibworth. As the congregation was small, and he lived in an obscure village, he could devote almost his whole time to the farther acquisition of knowledge and learning; and this he did with indefatigable zeal. Soon after his settlement at Kibworth, one of his fellow-pupils having condoled with him, in a letter, on his being buried alive, he returned the following sensible and spirited answer: "Here I stick close "to those delightful studies which a favourable Providence "has made the business of my life. One day passeth away

* They may be seen in Orton's Memoirs, p. 16—18.

† Orton, ubi supra, p. 20. Doddridge's Letters, p. 7.

" after another, and I only know that it passeth pleasantly " with me. As for the world about me, I have very little " concern with it. I live almost like a tortoise, shut up in " its shell, almost always in the same town, the same house, " the same chamber. Yet I live like a prince; not indeed " in the pomp of greatness, but the pride of liberty; master " of my books, master of my time, and, I hope I may add, " master of myself. I can willingly give up the charms of " London, the luxury, the company, and the popularity of " it, for the secret pleasures of rational employment and " self-approbation; retired from applause and reproach, " from envy and contempt, and the destructive baits of ava- " rice and ambition. So that, instead of lamenting it as my " misfortune, you should congratulate me upon it as my " happiness, that I am confined to an obscure village; see- " ing it gives me so many valuable advantages, to the most " important purposes of devotion and philosophy; and I " hope I may add usefulness too.*" It is with peculiar pleasure that the writer of the present narrative has transcribed this passage; as he thinks that he has reason to reflect, with some degree of satisfaction, that the spending of a number of years in retired situations, may be favourable to the increase of knowledge, and the habits of study.

Whilst Mr. Doddridge lived at Kibworth, and during the earlier years of his ministry, he was very exact and careful in his preparations for the pulpit. Both his sermons and expositions were the result of deep attention and study; and they were drawn up with exactness of method, and correctness and elegance of stile. By this means he contracted a habit of delivering his sentiments usually with judgment, and always with ease and freedom of language, when, afterwards he was obliged, from the multiplicity of his duties and engagements, principally to have recourse to extempore speaking. Indeed, excepting when he was called out on particular occasions, the period I have now specified was the time in which Mr. Doddridge more especially excelled as a

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 20—22. Doddridge's Letters, p. 10, 11.

preacher. When I was a student under him, he used frequently, on a Saturday evening, to read in the academy, the sermons he had made in his younger years; and they were much admired by his pupils, as containing models for their imitation, far superior to those which he could then have leisure to give in his usual Sunday discourses. One thing which pleased most of us was, that these sermons had less of the Calvinistical dress of expression than was adopted by him after his settlement at Northampton.

Besides the pains which Mr. Doddridge took to acquaint himself with controversial and critical theology, he was in the continual habit of reading deeply and seriously the writers of practical divinity. Among these his peculiar favourites were Tillotson, Howe, and Baxter;* and undoubtedly they are authors from whom the clergy of every denomination may derive the richest stores of private improvement and public utility. I remember to have heard him speak of Barrow with great energy of commendation. Many of the divines of the latter part of the last century, (among whom the Church of England claims the larger number,) were incomparably excellent for the high spirit of devotion, the fulness of sentiment, and the energy and copiousness of stile; and the neglect of them has been of no advantage to modern times.

In the midst of Mr. Doddridge's serious pursuits, he did not discontinue his regard to polite literature. Having been early acquainted with the French tongue, he was frequent in the perusal of the elegant writers of that nation. He thought that many of them were possessed of very great genius, and he applauded them as intimately acquainted with the ancients, those prime masters of eloquence and poetry. Of all their dramatic poets, he met with none whom he admired so much as Racine. He was charmed with the pomp, elegance, and harmony of his language, as well as with the majesty, tenderness, and propriety of his sentiments. His pieces, in general, for the stage, he approved, as conducted

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 22.

with a wonderful mixture of grandeur and simplicity, which sufficiently distinguished him from the dulness of some tragedians, and the bombast of others. Another of Mr. Doddridge's favourite authors was Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray. That writer's Reflections upon Eloquence, in particular, he looked upon as one of the most judicious performances he had ever seen. Mr. Doddridge was not equally an admirer of the French sermons. These he judged to be far inferior to those of our English divines. Bourdaloue's, notwithstanding the high estimation they have been held in, appeared to him to be little better than empty harangues. Many of Chaminais' he esteemed to be good; but of all which he had then seen, he gave the preference to the discourses of Mr. Superville, the Protestant divine at Rotterdam. "He especially excels," said Mr. Doddridge, in a letter to an ingenious young friend, "in the beauty of his "imagery, descriptions, and similies, and some of the most "pathetic expostulations I ever saw. In short, I believe he is "perfectly to your taste; only there is one thing which will "displease you as much as it did me; which is, that many "of his arguments are very inconclusive, though generally "as good as high Calvinism will bear.*" It is certain, that Mr. Doddridge was afterwards particularly pleased with Saurin's sermons, and strongly recommended them to his pupils. Whether he was acquainted with Massillon is not recollected.

While Mr. Doddridge was thus solicitous to enrich his mind with various knowledge, and to qualify himself for appearing with every advantage in the pulpit, he was diligently attentive to the private duties of his station. He would often leave his study, to visit and instruct the people under his care. In his manner of conversation, he was careful to adapt himself to the capacities of his congregation, which consisted chiefly of persons in the lower ranks of life. This object, likewise, he seriously regarded in his public discourses, which, while they were judicious, and frequently

* Letters to and from the Rev. Dr. Doddridge, p. 26, 27.

elegant, were, at the same time, plain and easy to be understood. In this happy art he was probably not a little assisted by his intimate acquaintance with the works of the excellent Tillotson, which, however they may now be neglected by a fastidious age, will always deserve to be mentioned with honour, as having eminently contributed to the introduction of a rational and useful method of preaching in England. How anxious our young divine was, to discharge every part of his duty as a Christian minister, whether in or out of the pulpit, with the greatest fidelity and zeal, is evident from the copious extracts which Mr. Orton has given from his diary.*

In October 1725, Mr. Doddridge removed his abode to Market-Harborough, in doing which he did not discontinue his relation to the people at Kibworth. He preached to them as before, excepting on sacrament days, when his place was supplied by Mr. Some of Harborough, who had taken upon him the pastoral care of the small society at Kibworth, in conjunction with his own. This change in Mr. Doddridge's residence was very advantageous to him, as it gave him an opportunity of nearer converse and intimacy with a gentleman, to whom he had been under early obligations, and who, next to Mr. Clark, was, perhaps, the best friend he had ever experienced. Mr. Some was a person of uncommon piety, zeal, prudence, and sagacity. Indeed he appears to have been the prime ornament among the dissenting ministers in that part of the kingdom. For the memory of this excellent man, who died on the twenty-ninth of May 1737, Mr. Doddridge always maintained the most affectionate regard, which he strongly testified on several occasions. He published, in particular, some years after Mr. Some's decease, a judicious tract that had been written by him on the subject of inoculation, for the purpose of removing the religious difficulties with which many worthy minds had been embarrassed, in respect to that practice. In this view the pamphlet has been of very considerable utility. I do not find that Mr. Some ever printed more than two sermons; one in the year 1729, concerning the proper "Methods to

* Orton, ubi supra, 23—32.

be taken by Ministers for the Revival of Religion;" and another in 1736, preached at the funeral of the Reverend Thomas Saunders of Kettering.*"

The abilities and talents of Mr. Doddridge occasioned him to be sought for by much more numerous congregations than that in which he first settled. Even so early as in the year 1723, when he had but lately finished his academical studies, he received an invitation to undertake the pastoral charge of a large society of dissenters in the city of London. But he thought himself unequal to so great a burden. Besides this, he was discouraged by the unhappy differences which at that time subsisted, between the non-conformist ministers of the metropolis and its neighbourhood, about subscribing or not subscribing to articles of faith, in the words of human device, as a text of orthodoxy. In his answer to the gentleman who transmitted the invitation to him, he displayed the liberality of his own mind; for after mentioning some other objections to the proposal, he added as follows: "I might also have been required to subscribe; which I "am resolved never to do. We have no disputes on that "matter in these parts. A neighbouring gentleman once "endeavoured to introduce a subscription; but it was ef- "fectually over-ruled by Mr. Some of Harborough, Mr. "Norris of Welford, and Mr. Jennings, my tutor. I shall "content myself here, with being a benevolent well-wisher "to the interests of liberty and peace.†"

In 1726-7, Mr. Doddridge was recommended by his friend Mr. Clark to a vacant congregation at Hertford; the consequence of which was, that two persons were sent to Kibworth, to hear him. The result of this matter, which strongly displays the ridiculously narrow spirit of some of the dissenters of that period, is thus humorously related by Mr. Clark in one of his letters: "Not having any other opportu- "nity, I thought it necessary to send you without delay by "the post, to complain of your keeping in your place of wor- "ship such stumbling-blocks and superstitious customs, as

* Ibid. p. 32, 33, 44, Cooke's Historical Register, vol. ii. p. 312.

† Orton, ubi supra, p. 40.

"are very offensive to your Christian brethren. It is "no wonder you are thought a legal preacher, when you "have the ten commandments painted upon the walls of "your chapel. Besides, you have a clerk, it seems, so im- "pertinent as to say, *Amen*, with an audible voice. *O tem- "pora! O mores!* that such a rag of popery should ever be "tolerated in a congregation of Protestant dissenters! and, "to complete all, you, the minister, conclude your prayers "with a form called the Lord's prayer. Do you know what "mischief you have done? What a blot you have brought "upon yourself by such offensive practices? It may be, "you are surprised at what this means. In a few words then, "Mr. Chandler of Bedford, being on his return home at Mr. "Eccles's, desired him upon my motion to write to Hert- "ford, to recommend you to them in his name, as a very fit "man to be their minister. Upon this, two members of "that congregation went over the other day to hear you "preach. But no sooner did they come into the place, but "they found themselves disappointed; and what they heard "at the close, confirmed them so much in their prejudices, "that they thought it needless to say any thing of their in- "tention to you. Going to preach last Sunday at Ware, I "heard all this there, and afterwards at Hertford. I cannot "but pity them for their weakness; and do not know but it "is happy for you not to encounter such odd humours."* It was indeed happy for Mr. Doddridge, that he had not to encounter with people of such a rigid and capricious disposition. However, it ought to be remembered, that some of the dissenters at Hertford had sense enough to be angry that two persons should take upon them to judge for the whole society.

Mr. Doddridge, in the year 1728, received a pressing invitation from one of the dissenting congregations at Nottingham, and a few months after from the other. There were many circumstances that tended to recommend both the invitations. The societies were large and respectable, the salary considerable, the town populous and flourishing, its situ-

* Letters to and from the Rev. Dr. Doddridge, p. 14, 15.

ation delightful, the conversation agreeable, and the prospect of usefulness very extensive. Nevertheless, after mature deliberation, Mr. Doddridge determined to adhere to the plan of continuing to pursue his schemes of improvement in a more private residence. In this determination he did not act without consulting his wisest friends, and seeking for Divine direction. In 1729, he was chosen assistant to Mr. Some at Harborough; the congregation at that place being desirous to enjoy his labours more frequently than before: the result of which choice was, that he preached there and at Kibworth alternately. At this time of his life, though he was but little more than twenty-seven years of age, the fame of his abilities and worth was so much spread abroad, that his settlement among them was sought for by various large societies besides those already mentioned. But his regard to Mr. Some, his love for the people at Kibworth, and his solicitude to have greater leisure for study than he could enjoy in a populous town and extensive connections, still retained their influence in leading him to decline the different proposals that were made to him for a removal.*

When Mr. Doddridge left the academy, Mr. Jennings, a few weeks before his death, which happened in the prime of his days, on the eighth of July 1723, earnestly pressed his pupil to keep in view the improvement of the course he had gone through of academical lectures, and to study that course in such a manner as to refer what occurred to him, to the compendiums his tutor had drawn up, that they might be illustrated and enriched. Our young divine did not then suspect what was the motive of Mr. Jennings in giving him this advice. But he afterwards was informed, that his tutor had declared it to be his opinion, that, if it should please God to remove him early in life, Mr. Doddridge was the most likely of any of his pupils to pursue the schemes which he had formed; and which, indeed, were very far from being complete, as he died about eight years after he had undertaken the conduct of a theological academy. Agreeably to Mr. Jennings's advice, Mr. Doddridge, during his set-

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 39—41.

tlement at Kibworth, reviewed his course of lectures with care. About this time, an ingenious young gentleman, Mr. Thomas Benyon, son of Dr. Samuel Benyon, a celebrated minister and tutor at Shrewsbury, who died in 1708, had entertained thoughts of reviving the scheme of his father. Conversing one day with Mr. Doddridge, the discourse turned upon the best method of conducting the preparatory studies of youth intended for the ministry. In conclusion, Mr. Benyon earnestly requested of his friend, that he would write down his sentiments upon the subject. Mr. Doddridge consented, and drew up his thoughts in the form of a letter, which grew into a considerable volume. But when he had just finished the work, Mr. Benyon, for whose use it was designed, died, and the treatise remained in the writer's own hands. Mr. Saunders of Kettering, happened to see it in his study, desired to have the perusal of it; after which he shewed it to Dr. Watts, with whom Mr. Doddridge had then no personal acquaintance. The doctor, who was much pleased with the plan, made some remarks upon it, and communicated it to several of his friends, who all concurred in opinion, that the person who had drawn it up was best qualified to carry it into execution. Accordingly, application was made to him for that purpose; and Mr. Some was the gentleman principally employed in managing the affair. He knew that Mr. Doddridge had every important and desirable qualification for the instruction of youth; and therefore he not only proposed his undertaking it, but pressed the matter upon him in the strongest terms. Nor would he by any means allow the validity of his plea of incapacity, but urged that, supposing him less capable than his friends believed, he might improve his time in his retirement, when engaged in such a work with a few pupils, to greater advantage than without them. This was a very proper consideration: for every man who has sustained the character of a preceptor, if he has discharged his duty with a suitable degree of attention and fidelity, must be sensible that the employment has highly contributed to the accuracy and increase of his own

knowledge. Mr. Some had likewise, unknown to Mr. Doddridge, obtained from the relations of some young men, the promise of putting them under his care, by which another objection that might have arisen was precluded; and Mr. Saunders offered his brother to be the first pupil of the intended academy. It was with great humility and diffidence that Mr. Doddridge hearkened to these solicitations. He was deeply convinced of the importance and difficulty of the undertaking, and devoutly implored the direction and assistance of the Supreme Being. Whilst he was still in doubt with regard to his final determination, he esteemed it a kind providence, that the dissenting ministers in the neighbourhood had agreed to meet at Lutterworth, on the tenth of April 1729, to spend a day in humiliation and prayer for the revival of religion. To this assembly Mr. Some proposed the scheme that had been concerted for the establishment of an academy at Harborough, under the care of his young friend; and it met with the entire approbation of the gentlemen present. They unanimously concurred in their sentiments of the propriety and usefulness of the design, and Mr. Doddridge's qualifications for conducting it; and they promised him all the assistance and encouragement that were in their power. This had great weight in forming his resolution. Nevertheless, before the matter was absolutely determined, he thought proper to consult some of his brethren and friends at a distance, and especially Mr. Clark; who at first hesitated on the subject, and, on account of Mr. Doddridge's admirable talents for the pulpit, seemed rather to wish that he might have a settlement in London. However, he soon approved of the scheme, as did the rest of the persons whose advice had been solicited. Mr. Doddridge consented, therefore, to the execution of a plan which, on every side, was so zealously and earnestly recommended. What much encouraged him to enter upon the office of an academical tutor, was the circumstance of his retreat at Harborough; the pastoral care of the congregation there, and at Kibworth, being fulfilled by Mr. Some; so that he had little

to do as a minister excepting to make one sermon a-week, which considering the vigour and celerity of his mind, was an easy task.

Mr. Doddridge having, at length, resolved to comply with the wishes of his friends, he immediately reviewed his plan of academical studies, with Dr. Watts's remarks, and corresponded with that eminent divine on the subject. He read, likewise, every valuable book which he could meet with on the education of youth, and made such extracts as he thought might be conducive to the execution of his design. Besides this, he wrote many letters to the ministers of different denominations, with whom he was acquainted, requesting their advice in his great undertaking. One gentleman whom he particularly consulted was the Rev. Dr. Samuel Wright, of London, who favoured him with his sentiments at large, especially on the head of divinity lectures. Mr. Clark communicated to him various transcripts from the lectures of Mr. Jones, who had been a tutor of distinguished ability and learning, at Tewksbury in Glocestershire. With all these preparations, Mr. Doddridge thought it his wisdom to make a trial first in a private way, with only two or three students, declining to receive others that offered. At Midsummer, 1729, he opened his academy. The subject of his first lecture to his pupils was of a religious kind, shewing the nature, reasonableness, and advantages, of their acknowledging God in their studies. In the second, he gave directions for their behaviour to him, to each other, to the family, and all around them; with proper motives to excite their attention to a right conduct in these respects. After this he proceeded to his ordinary course.* Thus was he led to a situation of life which formed the most distinguished scene of his usefulness. The late Rev. Hugh Farmer, so well known among the Dissenters as a most excellent preacher, and by the literary world in general for his extensive learning, and valuable publications, was one of Mr. Doddridge's earliest students.

* Ibid. 41—47. Doddridge's Letters, p. 19, 80.

Our young tutor had been employed in his preceptorial capacity but a few months, when he was directed by Providence to a situation of greater usefulness as a Christian minister. There being a vacancy in the dissenting congregation at Castle-Hill, in Northampton, in consequence of the removal of Mr. Tingey to London, Mr. Doddridge preached occasionally to them, as did others of his brethren. In doing this, his services were so acceptable to the people, that he was invited and strongly urged by them to become their pastor. Some of his friends, and particularly Mr. Some, advised his continuance at Harborough. The arguments alledged by them were, that he would have more time to apply to his work as a tutor, than if he had the sole care of a large society: and that there was another minister, who, it was thought, might well supply the vacancy, though perhaps, not in every respect equally to the satisfaction of the congregation. These considerations had such weight with him, that he determined to continue in his present station. In pursuance of this view of the case, Mr. Some went to Northampton, to persuade the people to wave their application. But when he came there, and saw their zeal and affection in the affair, and heard the motives by which they acted, and the circumstances in which they stood, he was, as he expressed it, like Saul among the prophets, and immediately wrote to Mr. Doddridge to press his acceptance of the invitation. The same thing was strongly urged by his friend Mr. Clark. Still, however, he was averse, on many accounts, to a change in his situation. But being desirous of testifying his gratitude and regard to the congregation, he made them a visit, on purpose to explain in person his reasons for declining their proposal. Whilst he was on this visit, several events occurred, which strongly tended to prevail upon him to alter his resolution. One or two of them, perhaps, may be deemed, by some of those who may read Mr. Orton's account of them, to have a tincture of enthusiastic weakness; but there was an argument presented to him, which must be allowed to have had very great weight. Before he returned to Harborough, the young persons of the so-

ciety came to him in a body: earnestly entreated his settlement among them; and promised to submit to all such methods of instruction as he should think proper. This last circumstance was the consideration that turned the scales for his going to Northampton, after they had long hovered in uncertainty.

On the twenty-fourth of December 1729, Mr. Doddridge removed, with his academy, from Harborough to Northampton, and in the space of two or three weeks commenced house-keeping. This important change in his situation was not suffered to pass without his entering into a severe examination of his own mind, and forming the most pious and sacred resolutions with respect to his conduct, both as a master of a family and a minister of the gospel. That he might be the better prepared for the large pastoral work now devolved upon him, he employed part of the time between his settlement and his ordination in reading the best treatises on the qualifications and duties of the ministerial office. The books particularly studied by him were Chrysostom on the Priesthood, Bowles's Pastor Evangelicus, Burnet on the Pastoral care, and Baxter's Gildas Salvianus. He read likewise, the lives of some pious and active ministers, among which that of the Rev. Mr. Philip Henry afforded him much instruction and encouragement. Besides this, he selected, from the works which he perused, the most important advices, reflections, and motives; and made a collection of those maxims of prudence and discretion, an attention to which he thought would be calculated to secure esteem and usefulness.

About two months after Mr. Doddridge's settlement at Northampton, he was seized with a dangerous illness, which gave many painful fears to his friends, lest a life of such distinguished excellence, and such promising utility, should be speedily cut off. But, through a merciful Providence, he recovered from the disorder, and, in due time, his health was completely restored. While he was yet in a very weak state, the day arrived, which had been fixed upon for his ordination; and it was a day to him of great solemnity and importance, and which exercised his most devout meditations.

This event took place on the nineteenth of March 1729-30. It is but an act of justice to record the names of the worthy ministers who were engaged in setting apart for the pastoral office so eminent an instrument of service to the church and the world. Mr. Goodrich of Oundle began with prayer and reading the scriptures. Mr. Dawson of Hinckley prayed before sermon. Then Mr. Watson of Leicester preached a discourse from 1 Timothy iii. 1. "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." After this, the call of the church was read by Mr. Norris of Welford; and when Mr. Doddridge had declared his acceptance of it, he delivered his confession of faith, which was followed by what is usually called the ordination prayer. The charge of Mr. Doddridge was given by Mr. Clark of St. Alban's, and the exhortation to the people by Mr. Saunders of Kettering; and the whole solemnity was concluded with a prayer by Mr. Mattock of Daventry.* It is rather surprising that we do not meet with the name of Mr. Some on this occasion. Some particular incident, now not known, perhaps a sudden illness, might have deprived Mr. Doddridge of the assistance of so valuable and intimate a friend That the cause should not have been mentioned by Mr. Orton in his Memoirs, or by Mr. Doddridge in his Diary, is an omission that could scarcely have been expected.

It would carry us beyond the limits that must be assigned to the present narrative, to describe, at large, the diligence, zeal, and fervour, with which Mr. Doddridge discharged his pastoral duty. This matter is fully insisted upon by Mr. Orton, to whom we must refer for a more minute detail of particulars. However, we shall insist upon a few leading circumstances. Mr. Doddridge's first care was to know the state of his flock; for which purpose he made diligent inquiry into the members and stated hearers of which it consisted, and entered in a book their names, families, places of abode, connections, and characters. By this he was better enabled to adapt his visits and advices to their respective si-

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 47—55.

tuations, and their religious improvement. With regard to the composition of sermons, his work as a tutor, and the pastoral inspection of a very numerous congregation, rendered it next to impossible that his discourses for the pulpit should be so exact and accurate as they were in the former part of his ministry. "Nor was it," says Mr. Orton, "needful. "Having habituated himself, for several years, to composi- "tions, having laid up such a fund of knowledge, especially "of the Scriptures, which was daily increasing by his stu- "dies and lectures, he sometimes only wrote down the heads "and leading thoughts of his sermons, and the principal texts "of Scripture he designed to introduce. But he was so "thoroughly master of his subject, and had such a ready ut- "terance and so warm a heart, that perhaps few ministers "can compose better discourses than he delivered from these "short hints."* This encomium is, I think, to be admitted with some slight degree of abatement. The sermons of Dr. Doddridge were different, as he was differently circumstanced. When he had leisure to draw out his plan, and the hints of what he proposed to say, to a considerable extent, his discourses were often excellent in an high degree. But, at other times, when he could but just lay down his scheme, with only a very few thoughts under it, his sermons, especially if he was not in a full flow of spirits, were less valuable. Once, during my residence with him, a number of pupils complained, through the medium of Mr. Orton, that, though their revered tutor's academical lectures were admirable, they had not in him a sufficiently correct model of pulpit composition. The consequence of the intimation was, that his sermons became far superior to what they had sometimes formerly been; for he was the most candid of all men to the voice of gentle admonition. When, however, he took the least pains, he was always perspicuous in his method, and natural and orderly in the arrangement of his sentiments, and hence he furnished an example, from which many of the young men educated under him derived no small benefit in their future labours. I remember a remarkable instance of

* Ibid. p. 57. 58.

his power in extemporaneous speaking. Akenside the poet, who in early life was settled, for a short time, at Northampton, being visited by some relations from Newcastle upon Tyne, who were Dissenters, came with them, unexpectedly, one Sunday morning, to Dr. Doddridge's meeting. The subject he preached upon was a common orthodox topic, for which he had scarcely made any preparation. But he roused his faculties on the occasion, and spoke with such energy, variety, and eloquence, as excited my warmest admiration, and must have impressed Dr. Akenside with a high opinion of his abilities. The ingenious poet, and the learned divine were in the habits of considerable intimacy while the former resided at Northampton. A matter of controversy between them was, how far the ancient heathen philosophers were acquainted with, and had inculcated, the doctrine of immortality. Akenside contended for the honour of the philosophers, and Doddridge for that of the Christian revelation. The subject was pursued in express conferences, for two or three evenings; and both the gentlemen exerted their talents, and collected their literature on the different sides of the question. Mr. Doddridge, who loved to inform his pupils of whatever he met with which he thought would contribute to their instruction and pleasure, related to us, on the succeeding mornings, the arguments that had been produced, and the result of the debate.

Without entering into a particular detail of many things which might be said of Mr. Doddridge as a preacher, I cannot help taking notice that he was always warm and affectionate in the applications of his sermons. His sentiments on this head he has thus expressed: "It is indeed unworthy "the character of a man and a Christian, to endeavour to "transport men's passions, while the understanding is left "uninformed, and the reason unconvinced. But, so far as "is consistent with a proper regard to this leading power of "our nature, I would speak and write of divine truths with "a holy fervency. Nor can I imagine that it would bode "well to the interest of religion to endeavour to lay all those "passions asleep, which surely God implanted in our hearts

" to serve the religious as well as the civil life, and which, " after all, will probably be employed to some very excellent " or very pernicious purposes."* This is the language of wisdom. True eloquence consists in an union of the rational, the forcible, and the pathetic; and to address to the affections, as well as to the reason, of mankind, is the dictate of the soundest philosophy. The cold and feeble conclusions of many discourses from the pulpit, are as disgusting to a just taste, as they are unprofitable with regard to religious improvement.

It must not be omitted, that Mr. Doddridge thought it a part of ministerial prudence to take public notice of remarkable providential occurrences. He endeavoured, in his sermons, to deduce lessons of wisdom and piety from important transactions, affecting the nation, town, or any considerable number of his hearers. Nor did he neglect uncommon appearances of nature, or other events, that were the subjects of general conversation; to which may be added, the seasons of the year, and especially the mercies of harvest. From an attention to these different circumstances, his discourses were accompanied with a greater extent of variety and usefulness. He was a friend to funeral sermons, which, if they be not too frequently exercised, or converted to the purpose of adulation, constitute an instructive and an affecting part of compositions for the pulpit. In his manner of speaking, he had an earnestness and pathos which tended greatly to affect his hearers. By some persons, his pronunciation and action were judged to be too strong and vehement; but to those who were acquainted with the vivacity of his temper, and his usual mode of conversation, it appeared quite natural and unaffected.

With respect to his conduct, as a minister, out of the pulpit, it must suffice briefly to observe, that he was very exact in the exercise of Christian discipline, and in separating those from the church who were a reproach to their religious profession: that he had a deep concern, and affectionate re-

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 61.

gard for the rising generation; and that, in the midst of his numerous duties and engagements, it was matter of surprise he could spare so much time, as he did, for pastoral visits. It was a grief to him to find, that the children of some of his hearers, through the ignorance and poverty of their parents, had never been taught to read; and therefore he persuaded his people, in 1738, to concur with him in establishing a charity school. In this benevolent design he met with so much encouragement, that a foundation was laid for instructing and clothing twenty boys, who were put under the care of a pious and skilful master. The doctor himself often visited the school, and examined and exhorted the children; accompanying his exhortations with affectionate prayers for their improvement and welfare. With such distinguished abilities of the mind, and with such excellent virtues of the heart, it will not be deemed surprising, that he possessed in a very high degree, the esteem and love of his congregation. In his last will he bore this testimony to their character, "That he had spent the most delightful hours of his life, in "asserting the devotions of as serious, as grateful, and as "deserving a people, as perhaps any minister ever had the "happiness to serve."* This character was no doubt generally, and indeed most universally true. Nevertheless, he was not without his calls for the exercise of patience. There were persons belonging to his society who were narrow bigots, and weak enthusiasts; and these sometimes obtruded upon him in a foolish and troublesome manner. He behaved, however, to them with a condescension and tenderness which they scarcely deserved, and of which few ministers of the gospel would be able to set an equally striking example.

In 1730, Mr. Doddridge entered into the matrimonial relation with Mrs. Mercy Maris, a native of Worcester, and a Lady in whom he found every qualification that could render marriage desirable. She was indeed, a religious, prudent, and affectionate companion. Her constitution was delicate,

* Ibid. p. 62—73.

and her health, at times, precarious, which often gave her husband no small cause of alarm; but she was happily continued to him through his whole life, and survived him a great number of years.* Of his affection and tenderness for her much might be said, were it necessary to enlarge on the subject. A better proof of this cannot be afforded, than by a copy of verses which he once wrote to her, from London, when absent on a journey. They are as follows:

Tedious moments! speed your flying,
Bring *Cordelia* to my arms;
Absent, all in vain I'm trying
Not to languish for her charms.

Busy crowds in vain surround me,
Brightest beauties shine in vain;
Other pleasures but confound me,
Pleasures but renew my pain.

What though three whole years are ended
Since the priest has join'd our hands,
Every rolling year has tended
Only to endear our bands.

Let the wanton wits deride it,
Husband is a charming name;
None can say, but who has try'd it,
How enjoyment feeds the flame

Wives our better angels are,
Angels in their loveliest dress,
Gentle soothers of our care,
Smiling guardians of our peace.

Happy state of mortal treasures,
Circling maze of noble love:
Where the sense's highest pleasures
But the meanest blessing prove.

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 129.

Dear *Cordelia!* hither flying,
Fold thy husband in thy arms;
While thus t'amuse myself I'm trying,
More I languish for thy charms.

Mr. Doddridge, in younger life, afforded various proofs of a poetical turn, most of which are in the possession of the present biographer. The excellent lines which he wrote on the motto to the arms of his family, "Dum vivimus vivamus," have appeared in several publications. Dr. Johnson's opinion of these lines was, that they constituted one of the finest epigrams in the English language.* Though they are so well known, they cannot be omitted in any memoirs of the author's life.

"Live, while you live," the epicure would say,
"And seize the pleasures of the present day."
"Live, while you live," the sacred preacher cries,
"And give to GOD each moment as it flies."
Lord, in my views let both united be;
I live in pleasure when I live to Thee.

Mr. Doddridge had a talent at satirical epigrams; an instance of which is the following, written on one of his pupils, a weak young man, who thought that he had invented a method of flying to the moon.

And will Volatio leave this world so soon,
To fly to his own native seat, the moon?
'Twill stand, however, in some little stead
That he sets out with such an empty head.

When Mr. Doddridge removed to Northampton, his academy was only in its infancy; but it soon grew into great reputation, and the number of students increased every year. In 1734, he found it necessary to have a stated assistant, to whom he assigned part of the junior pupils, and the superintendance of the whole of them when he happened to be absent. He was solicitous to maintain the reputation and

* Boswell's Journal, p. 334.

esteem of the gentlemen who successively sustained this character, by his own behaviour towards them, and the respect which he required from the students to them; "and "they thought themselves happy in his friendship, and the "opportunities they had, by his converse, instructions, and "example, to improve themselves, while they were assist-"ing in the education of others."* In these words, which are Mr. Orton's, he spoke from his own experience; and every one who acted in the same capacity, might adopt similar language. Such of them as I have been acquainted with, were very respectable for their knowledge; and in the choice of them a particular regard was paid to their skill in the Greek and Latin classics, as well as to their ability for instructing the young men in certain departments of mathematical and philosophical science. Among Dr. Doddridge's assistants, besides Mr. Orton, may be named the late Rev. Dr. Aikin, and the Rev. Mr. James Robinson, who has been for many years Professor of Oriental Literature in the University at Edinburgh. Dr. Aikin was, afterwards, first, classical, and then theological tutor, at Warrington; and perhaps, as a lecturer, he was never exceeded. This is the testimony that has been uniformly given of him by all who had the advantage of being his pupils. What he was as a parental instructor, will be judged of from the excellent and elegant productions of his son and daughter, Dr. John Aikin and Mrs. Barbauld.

Since Dr. Doddridge's office as a tutor was the most important station in which he appeared, it is an essential part of a life written of him, to relate, somewhat minutely, how he conducted himself in that capacity. He chose to have as many pupils as possible in his own family, that they might be more immediately under his own eye and government; and latterly, he had a house large and commodious enough to contain all of them, two or three excepted. The orders of the seminary were such as suited students of a certain age; being a due medium between the rigour of school dis-

* Orton, ubi supra.

cipline and an unlimited indulgence. It was an established law, that every pupil should rise at six o'clock in the summer, and at seven in the winter. Each young man, in his turn, sustained the weekly office of monitor, part of whose business was to call up the rest every morning; and they were to appear in the public room, soon after the fixed hour. Those who did not attend were subject to a pecuniary penalty; but if any repeatedly indulged to a habit of sloth, they were obliged to prepare an additional academical exercise. The punishment of the monitor's neglect, which I never recollect to have happened, was a double fine. Their tutor set them an example of diligence by being almost universally present with them at these early risings. After a prayer, which seldom lasted more than two or three minutes, the young gentlemen retired to their respective closets till the time of family-worship. That service was begun by the doctor with a short petition for the divine presence and blessing. Some of the students then read a chapter of the Old Testament from Hebrew into English, which he critically expounded, and practically improved. After this a psalm was sung, and he concluded with a longer prayer than at the beginning. On Sunday mornings something entirely devotional and practical was substituted in the room of the usual exposition. In the evening the worship was conducted in the same method, with only this difference, that a chapter of the New Testament was read by the pupils from Greek into English, and the senior students prayed in rotation. The Doctor, when present, which was generally the case, expounded the New Testament in the same manner as he did the Old.* It would give me pleasure, if I could say, that some of the young men never slily placed an English Bible by the side of the Hebrew one. Such of the pupils as were boarded out of the house, were obliged to attend and take their parts in the domestic devotions; and those, whether in or out of the family, who were not present, were subject to a fine, or, if their absence was frequent, to public reprehen-

* Ibid. p. 75, 76.

sion. By the method which Dr. Doddridge pursued, the students had an opportunity of hearing him expound most of the Old Testament, and the whole of the New, more than once. The more diligent among them took hints of what was delivered. One piece of advice given them by the doctor was, to get the Old Testament, and Wetstein's Greek Testament, interleaved, in quarto, in order to write in them the most considerable remarks for the illustration of the Scriptures, which either occurred in their tutor's expositions, or were derived from their own reading, conversation, and reflections.

Soon after breakfast, Dr. Doddridge proceeded to the discharge of his academical duty. The several classes were taken by him in their proper order, and he lectured to each of them about the space of an hour. His assistant was at the same time engaged in a similar manner. Rich's shorthand, was one of the first things which he expected his pupils to learn, that they might be able to transcribe his own lectures, and make extracts from the books they read and consulted, with greater ease and celerity. Indeed, this was a circumstance from which they might derive great advantage in future life, as the experience of the present writer can testify. Care was taken, in the first year of the young men's course, that they should retain and improve that knowledge of Greek and Latin which they had acquired at school. With regard to the Hebrew language, they were either initiated into it, or, if they had learned it before, were carried on to greater improvement. Usually the attention to classical literature, was extended through the second year of the course. Of late, the dissenting academies have exerted a far superior zeal with respect to this very important object. Whilst I was one of the tutors at Hoxton, classical instruction was continued at least for three years; and at the new college, Hackney, it makes a part of the whole course. Besides what was done in a morning, the Greek and Latin lectures, at Dr. Doddridge's, were read every evening, usually by the assistant, though sometimes by himself. If any of the pupils were deficient in the knowledge of the Greek, such of

the seniors as were best skilled in that language were appointed to be their instructors, at separate hours. Those who chose it were taught the French tongue. The longer Dr. Doddridge lived, the more was he convinced of the great importance of a learned, as well as a pious education, for the Christian ministry. Having found that some who came under his care were not competently acquainted with the classics, he formed a scheme for assisting youths, of a promising genius and a serious temper, in their preparations for academical studies; and be met with good encouragement in the scheme from the contributions of many of his friends. As it commenced only two years before his death, much progress could not be made in it; but a similar plan has since been adopted by Mr. Coward's trustees, with singular utility. Dr. Doddridge was not, in every instance, so attentive to the classical preparation of the students received into his seminary, as could have been wished. Sometimes he admitted serious young men, of perhaps three or four and twenty years of age, who had had very little of that preparation, and who never distinguished themselves, in this respect, by their subsequent improvement. He thought, however, that they might be useful in plain country congregations; which was undoubtedly the case. Several of them, though not abounding in learning, sustained the ministerial character with a decent reputation. The doctor, I believe, towards the close of his life, was of opinion that he had gone far enough in this matter.

Other things which were read to the students, during the first year of their course, were systems of logic, rhetoric, geography, and metaphysics. The logic was Dr. Watts's, which was very fully pursued. On rhetoric the lectures were slender and imperfect, being only a slight enlargement of a small compendium that had been drawn up by Mr. Jennings. Geography was better taught; but of metaphysics there was only given at this time a brief epitome, as the great objects it presents were afterwards more amply considered. Under these several heads the pupils were referred to particular passages in such authors as treated upon them. This

part of the course was accompanied with lectures on the principles of geometry and algebra, which, besides their intrinsic excellence, were happily calculated to form in the young men a fixedness of attention, and a habit of rightly discriminating, and properly arranging their conceptions. When these branches of science were finished, the students were introduced to the knowledge of trigonometry, conic-sections, and celestial mechanics; under which last term was included a collection of important propositions, taken chiefly from Sir Isaac Newton, and relating especially, though not solely, to centripetal and centrifugal forces. A system of natural and experimental philosophy, comprehending mechanics, statics, hydrostatics, optics, pneumatics, and astronomy, was likewise read, with references to the best authors on these subjects. Muschenbroek was made use of in my time as a text book, and afterwards Rowning. For the particular objects to which they relate, recourse was had to Clare on Fluids, and Keill's Astronomy. The system of natural philosophy was illustrated by a neat and pretty large apparatus. As the pupils proceeded in their course, some other articles were also touched upon. Mr. Orton mentions particularly natural and civil history; but these two objects do not fall under my recollection. At most, they were scarcely enough considered to deserve a distinct specification. Such a view was given of the anatomy of the human body as was entitled to applause, and well calculated to inspire the young men with the sentiments of veneration and love for the supreme Artificer. In the latter years of their course, a large system, drawn by Dr. Doddridge himself, was read of Jewish Antiquities, with reference to the principal writers on the subject; in order to illustrate numberless passages of scripture, which could not otherwise be so well understood. In ecclesiastical history the Doctor lectured from Lampe's Epitome. On the various sects and doctrines of the ancient philosophers, he occasionally gave some instruction from Buddæus's Compendium; but this matter was never pursued to any considerable extent.

All these branches of study, though of no small consequence,

were, however, subordinate to what was the grand object of the attention of the young men, during three years of their course; which was Dr. Doddridge's System of Divinity, in the largest sense of the word; including what is most material in pneumatology and ethics. In this work were contained, in as few words as perspicuity would admit, the principal things which had occurred to the author's observation, relating to the constitution and properties of the human mind, the proofs of the existence and attributes of God, the nature of moral virtue, the various parts of it, the means subservient to it, and the sanctions by which its precepts, considered as the natural law of the Supreme Being, are enforced. Under this head the arguments of a future life, deducible from the light of reason, were particularly examined. A survey was added, of what is, and generally has been, the state of virtue in the world; whence a transition was easy to the necessity of a revelation, the encouragement to hope for it, and the kind of evidence with which it might probably be attended. Hence the work proceeded to the actual evidence that may be produced in favour of that revelation which is contained in the scriptures. The genuineness, credibility, and inspiration of the sacred books were then treated upon at large, and vindicated from the most material objections that have been urged against them by sceptical writers. This part of Dr. Doddridge's lectures was, perhaps of all others, the most important and useful. Having laid a firm foundation in so ample a statement of the evidences of Christianity, he entered into a copious detail of what were, or, at least, what appeared to him to be, the doctrines of scripture. In so doing, though he stated and maintained his own opinions, which in a considerable degree were calvinistical, he never assumed the character of a dogmatist. He represented the arguments, and referred to the authorities on both sides. The students were left to judge for themselves; and they did judge for themselves, with his perfect concurrence and approbation; though no doubt, it was natural for him to be pleased when their sentiments coincided with his own. Where this was not the case, it made no alteration in his

affection and kind treatment, as the writer of the present narrative can greatly witness. What seemed most evident to Dr. Doddridge on the subjects considered by him was digested into the form of propositions, some of which were problematical; and the chief controversies relative to each head were thrown into scholia. For the illustration of all of them, a large collection was made of references, in which the sentiments and reasonings of the principal authors on the points in question might be seen in their own words. It was the business of the pupils to read and abridge these references in the intervals between the lectures. Dr. Doddridge's System of Divinity was his capital work, as a tutor. Much labour was spent by him upon it; and he was continually enriching it with his remarks on any new productions upon the various subjects to which it extended. It was transcribed by the generality of the students; and it may be truly observed concerning it, that it was well calculated to lead them gradually on, from the first principles, to the most important and difficult parts of theological knowledge.

Besides Dr. Doddridge's expositions in the family, critical lectures on the New Testament were delivered once a-week, which the young men were permitted and encouraged to transcribe. In these were contained his observations on the language, meaning, and design of the sacred writings, and the interpretations and criticisms of the most eminent commentators. Many of these observations occur in his Family Expositor. As a set of lectures, they never attained to a very full and perfect form.

Polite literature, if not copiously insisted upon, was not, however, by any means neglected. No inconsiderable advantage was derived from the Doctor's being himself a man of taste, and a master of elegant composition. Without much direct instruction, the remarks which he occasionally and frequently made on the best writers, ancient and modern, were of great utility. The students, too, especially those of a classical turn, cherished in each other, by their discussions and debates, the principles of discernment with regard to the beauties of authors, whether in prose or verse.

In the last year of Dr. Doddridge's course, a set of lectures was given on preaching and the pastoral care. These contained directions concerning the method to be taken by the pupils to fit them for appearing with credit in the pulpit; the character of the chief practical divines and commentators; particular rules for the composition, style, arrangement, and delivery of sermons; and instructions relating to public prayer, exposition, catechising, the administration of the sacraments, and visiting. To these were added many general maxims for their conversation and conduct as ministers, and a variety of prudential hints for their behaviour in the particular circumstances and connections in which they might be placed. A regard to truth obliges me to observe, that, in these lectures, the Doctor carried his ideas of condescension to the weakness, and accommodation to the prejudices of mankind, farther than some persons will entirely approve. But in so doing he acted, I doubt not, with the most upright views, and from a sincere desire to be useful. His sentiments on this head had been early stated by him in his "Free thoughts on the most probable means of reviving the Dissenting Interest."

"While the students," says Mr. Orton, "were pursuing "these important studies, some lectures were given them on "civil law, the hieroglyphics and mythology of the antients, "the English history, particularly the history of nonconformity, and the principles on which a separation from the "church of England is founded." Such lectures might, I doubt not, be occasionally read; but they made no stated and regular part of the academical course. None of them, excepting those on nonconformity, were delivered during my residence at Northampton. I speak with the greater confidence on the subject, as I was never absent from a single lecture till the last month of my course, when I was prevented from attending on two or three Mondays, in consequence of having been engaged at a distance as an occasional preacher. The health which enabled me, and the diligence that led me to maintain this constant attendance, I have reason to reflect upon with thankfulness and pleasure.

One day in every week was set apart for public exercises; at which times the translations and orations of the junior pupils were read and examined. Such of the young men as had entered on the study of pneumatology and ethics, produced in their turns theses on the several subjects assigned them, which were mutually opposed and defended.* The senior students brought analyses of Scripture, the schemes of sermons, and afterwards the sermons themselves, which they submitted to the Doctor's examination and correction; and in this part of his work he was very exact, careful, and friendly; for he esteemed his remarks on their discourses more useful to the young preachers than any general rules of composition which could be offered them by those who were themselves most eminent in the profession.

It was Dr. Doddridge's care, that his pupils, through the whole series of their studies, might have such a variety of lectures weekly, as, without distracting them, would entertain and engage their minds. While they were attending and studying objects of the greatest importance, some of smaller moment, though beneficial in themselves, were set before them at proper intervals. It was contrived that they should have as much to read, between each lecture, as might keep them well employed; due time being allowed for necessary relaxations, and the reading of practical writers. The habitual perusal of such writers was recommended by their tutor with peculiar energy, and singular propriety; for few things can more effectually contribute to improve the understanding and mend the heart, and to fit a young man for ministerial duty and usefulness, than a large acquaintance with that most valuable part of literature; the great body of English sermons, and of compositions which have a similar nature and tendency. Dr. Doddridge often examined what books the students read, besides those to which they were

* "Those," says Mr. Orton, "who had finished ethics, delivered homilies "(as they were called, to distinguish them from sermons) on the natural and "moral perfections of God, and the several branches of moral virtue." But no such homilies, as distinct from orations and theses, occur to my recollection Indeed, I am convinced, that the distinction did not take place in my time.

referred in their lectures, and directed them to such as were best suited to their age, character, and intended profession. In this respect they were very advantageously situated, as they enjoyed the use of a valuable library, consisting of several thousand volumes. To this library, under some prudent regulations, they had access at all times. As their tutor was sensible that a numerous collection of books might be a snare, rather than a benefit, to the students, unless they had an experienced friend to direct them in the choice of them, and in the proper period for their being pursued, he was particularly solicitous that they might have suitable advice on the subject. With this view, he sometimes gave to his pupils lectures on the books in the library; going over the several shelves in order, and informing them of the character of each work, and its author, so far as he was known. His observations were not only instructive but pleasant; being often intermixed with anecdotes of the writers who were mentioned. It may truly be said of the lectures on the library, that they displayed the surprising extent of the Doctor's reading and knowledge, and that they were useful in a variety of respects. My mind still retains, with advantage and pleasure, the impression of many of his remarks.

Dr. Doddridge's manner of lecturing was well adapted to engage the attention and love of his pupils, and to promote their diligent study of the subjects upon which he treated. He expected from them, when they assembled in their respective classes, an account of the reasonings, demonstrations, scriptures, or facts, considered in the former lectures and references; and he allowed and encouraged them to propose any objections which might arise in their own minds, or had occurred in the authors they perused. If, at any time, their objections were petulant or impertinent, he patiently heard and mildly answered them; for he put on no magisterial airs, but always addressed them with the freedom and tenderness of a father. He frequently and warmly urged them not to take their system of divinity from any man or body of men, but from the *Bible*. It was the *Bible* that he always referred and appealed to, upon every point in question, to which it

could be supposed to give any light. The appearances of bigotry and uncharitableness were resolutely checked by him; and he endeavoured to cure those who discovered any symptoms of this kind, by shewing them what might be said in support of the principles they disliked, and displaying the great learning and excellent characters of many by whom they were espoused.

It was Dr. Doddridge's great aim to give his pupils just and sublime views of the Christian ministry, and to lead them to direct all their studies so as to increase their abilities and qualifications for that important office. As he was desirous that they should be very serious preachers, he was particularly anxious that they might have a deep sense of divine things upon their own minds, and be well acquainted with the workings of the human heart with regard to eternal concerns; and he recommended to them, in the choice of the subjects upon which they preached, and in the manner of treating them, to have an especial view to the edification of the bulk of the people. Nor did he think this inconsistent with a due attention to the elegance of composition. That the students might be qualified to appear with esteem and honour in the world, and preside over politer societies with acceptance, he endeavoured to form them to an agreeable address and behaviour. This the œconomy and decorum of his own family was well calculated to produce. He observed, likewise, their way of speaking, instructed them in the proper manner of pronunciation, and laboured to prevent their contracting any unnatural tone or gesture. While he delivered his cautions upon these heads, such was his humility, that he warned them not to imitate himself in an error of this kind, of which he was sensible, but which he could not entirely correct.*

Another method taken by Dr. Doddridge, to qualify his pupils for appearing with early advantage in the pulpit, must not be forgotten. The senior students, before they began to preach, were accustomed, on the Sunday evenings,

* Orton, ubi supra, 76—90.

to visit the neighbouring villages, and to hold private meetings for religious worship in some licensed houses. It was not uncommon for fifty or sixty, or perhaps a larger number of people, to assemble on these occasions. Two of the young men usually went together; when a practical sermon was repeated, and one of them prayed before and the other after it, with proper intervals of singing. This custom was eminently useful, both in exercising the talents of the pupils, and in preparing them to appear with greater courage and freedom when they entered upon the ministry. Sometimes distinguished abilities, when accompanied with timidity and bashfulness, have been greatly obscured from the want of such preparatory exercises. The custom was otherwise in no small degree beneficial, as it tended to remove prejudices against the Dissenters, and to promote the ends of serious religion.

One proof of Dr. Doddridge's zealous concern for the improvement of his pupils, was, that he allowed them a free access to him in his own study, to ask his advice with regard to any part of their course, and to mention to him such difficulties as occurred to them either in their private reading or their lectures. In these cases he treated them with the utmost candour and tenderness, and pointed out whatever he thought would contribute to their advancement in knowledge. While he was thus solicitous to promote their intellectual acquirements, it was his main care, and what he apprehended to be most essential to their usefulness, that they might be pious and virtuous men. With this view the strictest regard was paid to their moral characters; and their behaviour when not employed in their studies or at lecture, was watchfully inspected. Inquiry was made what houses they frequented, and what company they kept; and none of the students were permitted to be from home after ten o'clock at night, under penalty of a considerable forfeiture. When any thing was found irregular in their conduct, or there appeared to be a danger of their falling into temptation, the Doctor privately admonished them in the most serious and affectionate manner. Nor was he satisfied with the external decorum of their

behaviour, but was anxious to perceive in them the genuine evidences of real religion.*

Dr. Doddridge "often expressed his wish," says Mr. Orton, "that different places of education could be provided "for persons intended for the ministry, and those for other "professions; as he thought it would be better security for "the religious character of the former; and some indul-"gencies might be allowed to the others, especially those "of rank and fortune, that were not proper for divinity stu-"dents, as few of them were likely ever to be affluent in "their circumstances.†" Much as I revere the memory of my tutor, and sincere as the respect is, which I entertain for his judgment on many points, I do not agree with him in this opinion. Perhaps it might be delivered by him at seasons of peculiar difficulty and embarrassment. It is certain that he did not strictly accord with it in his own practice; for he took young gentlemen of fortune into his house to the end of his life; and during the whole of my pupilage, which was at a time when his academy was in a very flourishing state, I do not recollect that any of the theological students were corrupted by the others. There is no possibility of forming any plan of education, with regard to which objections may not be made, and inconveniencies suggested. How many dissertations and treatises have been written concerning the question which is most preferable, a private or public education, without having hitherto brought the world to an uniformity of sentiment upon the subject! Different minds, as they are differently constituted, and as particular difficulties strike them, will view matters of this kind in a diversity of lights. For my own part, all the knowledge and experience which I have been able to obtain with respect to the point in debate, have convinced me that considerable advantages may, and do, arise from the connection of lay-pupils with those who are intended for divinity.

So great was Dr. Doddridge's reputation as a tutor, that the number of his students was large, being, one year with another, thirty-four; and the academy was usually on the in-

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 91—95. † Ibid. p. 101.

crease. During the twenty-two years in which he sustained this office, he had about two hundred young men under his care, of whom one hundred and twenty entered upon the ministry, and some who were designed for it died while under his instructions Several of his pupils were from Scotland and Holland. One person, who was intended for orders in the church of England, chose to spend a year or two under his tuition, before he went to the University. Others, whose parents were of that church, were placed in the Doctor's family, and were readily allowed to attend the established worship; for the constitution of his academy was perfectly catholic. Some young divines from Scotland, who had studied and taken the usual degrees in the Universities, and who had even begun to preach, came to attend his divinity lectures, and to receive his instructions, before they settled with parishes in their native country.*

Such was the manner in which Dr. Doddridge filled up his difficult and honourable station as a tutor; and from this survey of his conduct, which might have been extended farther, and which is in certain respects more copiously dwelt upon by Mr. Orton, every pious and judicious reader will acknowledge the wisdom and goodness of Providence, in raising up so excellent a person, and preparing him for so large a sphere of usefulness.†

Mr. Orton takes notice, that Dr. Doddridge's method of education bears a near resemblance to other seminaries of a like kind, among the Protestant Dissenters.‡ But it is proper to observe, that, of late years, there has been a considerable enlargement of the plan upon which several of them have been constructed. The academy at Warrington was formed on the scheme of three independent *Professors*, as they might justly be entitled; and when we mention among them, (not to name other respectable persons) such men as Dr. Taylor, Dr. Aikin, Dr. Priestley, Dr. Reinhold Forster, Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, and Dr. Enfield, we need not say how ably it was in succession supplied. The institution at Hoxton was on the same foundation; Dr. Savage, Dr. Rees,

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 102, 103. † Ibid. p. 104. ‡ Ibid. p. 74.

and myself, being distinct and subordinate tutors in the theological, mathematical, and philological departments. A similar arrangement takes place at the seminary of our congregational brethren in Homerton. The new college at Hackney has gone upon the plan of a still greater number of preceptors. Though the academy heretofore at Daventry, and since removed to Northampton, and that at Manchester, retain the form of one principal tutor, there are two separate assistants for the philosophical and classical studies.

May I be permitted to offer a brief sketch of theological education? A solid foundation ought to be laid in a truly grammatical acquaintance with the Latin and Greek tongues; and the higher classical writers should be read, more or less, through the whole course. Hebrew at least, amongst the Oriental languages, should by no means be neglected. The different branches of mathematical literature, and of natural philosophy, will demand a serious and diligent attention. Logic, metaphysics, universal grammar, rhetoric, criticism, chronology, and history, are objects, an acquaintance with which is not a little desirable. With respect to general divinity, including in that term pneumatology and ethics, I cannot help thinking that Dr. Doddridge's course of lectures with proper additions, improvements, and references to more recent authors, might still be made use of with eminent advantage. As it points out, in order, the most important objects of study, and the writers on both sides of the questions discussed, a young man will know where to apply for future information. Jewish antiquities and ecclesiastical history need scarcely to be mentioned, as they cannot be forgotten. If the systems of the ancient philosophers should be thought to merit much regard during academical studies, ample materials may be collected from Dr. Enfield's late most valuable work. A series of lectures on the divine dispensations would be peculiarly useful. Such a set of lectures was begun by Dr. Taylor at Warrington, but he did not live to complete the design. His work, so far as it was carried, is worthy of approbation, though the discourses are sometimes rather too declamatory, and perhaps not sufficiently accurate and criti-

cal. They have, however, deservedly found a place in the Bishop of Landaff's Collection of Theological Tracts. Another thing of consequence, is a series of observations on the times and occasions on which the books, especially of the New Testament, were written, the ancient copies and versions, and the principal commentators. The objects I particularly allude to, are those which are particularly treated of by Michaelis, Lardner, Jones, and Campbell. In addition to all these, a set of preaching lectures, more improved than those of Dr. Doddridge, and more adapted to present circumstances, would be an important acquisition. With the best instruction, it is not to be expected that all young men should be equally accomplished. It will be sufficient for many, that they have a competent stock of knowledge, united with serious dispositions. It is, however, very desirable, that some should so far rise above the common rank, as to be able, in their day, to support the honour of revelation against the attacks of its enemies, and to appear as defenders of the true Christian doctrines. It would not be amiss, if a few, of superior capacities and literature, would, after they quit the seminaries of education, study somewhat more systematically than is frequently done. In that case, the Dissenters would not be at a loss for tutors in peculiar emergencies. If I have assumed too great a liberty in suggesting these hints, I hope to be forgiven; as I have written not merely from a regard to the honour and benefit of the denomination of Christians to which I more immediately belong, but with a view to the general interests of religion and learning.

Since the abilities of Mr. Doddridge were such as called him so early in life to the important office of a theological tutor, it was natural to expect, from the same talents, that it would not be long before he appeared in the world as an author. His first distinct publication, which was in 1730, and printed without his name, was entitled, "Free thoughts "on the most probable Means of reviving the Dissenting "Interest, occasioned by the late Enquiry into the Causes "of its Decay." The writer of the Enquiry was for a time

supposed to be some lay-gentleman; but, in fact, it came from the pen of a young dissenting minister, of the name of Gough, who afterwards conformed to the church; and who, in 1750, published a volume of sermons, which have considerable merit as judicious and elegant compositions. Mr. Doddridge's pamphlet, wherein he materially differed from Mr. Gough with regard to the point in question, is a model of that candour and politeness with which remarks may be made on another's writings and opinions. The first instance in which Mr. Doddridge distinguished himself as a practical divine was in 1732, when he published "Sermons on the "Education of Children." These were principally intended for the use of his own congregation; and they contained, in a little compass, a variety of important advices and affecting motives, tending to assist and animate parents in the discharge of so momentous a duty. They were accompanied with a recommendatory preface by Mr. Some, and have since gone through several editions. In 1735, Mr. Doddridge's concern for the rising generation was still farther displayed, in "Sermons to Young People;" being seven in number, and which have met with equal success in the world. A discourse was printed by him in the same year, entitled, "The Care of the Soul urged as the One "Thing needful." This was followed in 1735-6, by a Sermon on the "Absurdity and Iniquity of Persecution for Conscience-Sake, in all its Forms and Degrees." It had been preached, I believe, on the preceding fifth of November, and, when it came from the press, was recommended to the public, in a short preface by Mr. Some, as the best he had ever seen on the subject, in so narrow a compass. In all respects, it is indeed an elaborate and excellent discourse, displaying with great energy and elegance, the grand principles of toleration and religious liberty.

In the year 1736, the two Colleges of the University of Aberdeen, in Scotland, concurred in conferring upon Mr. Doddridge the degree of Doctor in Divinity; upon which occasion his pupils thought it a proper piece of respect to congratulate him in a body. He was gratified by their compli-

ment, but told them, in answer to it, that " their learning, " piety, and zeal, would be more to his honour, and give " him a thousand times more pleasure, than his degree, or " any other token of public esteem." In the same year he published " Ten Sermons on the power and grace of Christ," and " The Evidences of his glorious Gospel." The three last, on the " Evidences of the Gospel," were afterwards separately printed, at the particular request of one of the first dignitaries of the church of England. They contain a very judicious summary of several of the principal arguments in support of the Christian revelation, and especially of those which prove the genuineness and credibility of the evangelical history. The author had the great satisfaction of knowing that these discourses were the means of converting to the belief of our holy religion, two gentlemen of liberal education and distinguished abilities, who had been sceptical upon this head. One of them, who had endeavoured to prejudice others against the evidences and contents of the gospel, became a zealous preacher of Christianity, as well as a shining ornament to it in his life and manners.*

Dr. Doddridge's next appearance from the press, was on an occasion very melancholy and affecting to himself and Mrs. Doddridge. This was the loss of his eldest daughter, a very amiable and hopeful child of nearly five years of age. The sermon which he preached on this event, and which was published in 1736-7, is entitled, " Submission to Divine Providence on the Death of Children, recommended and enforced." It is an admirable discourse, which displays in a very strong and striking light, the united piety and tenderness of the author's mind. Few superior instances of pathetic eloquence are to be met with in the English language. In 1737, the Doctor engaged in an ordination service at Wisbeach St. Peter's, in the Isle of Ely. The part allotted him was the sermon, which was printed under the title of " The Temper and Conduct of the primitive Ministers of the Gospel illustrated and recommended." Mr. William Johnston, the gentleman ordained, afterwards re-

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 98, 112, 117, 118.

moved to Harborough, and at length settled at Tunbridge-Wells, at which place he died, and where he was well known and justly respected by many considerable persons. He was the author of a pronouncing and spelling dictionary, which appeared in 12mo, in 1764, and which was not, in some respects, without its utility. It is now, I believe, entirely superseded by the far more elaborate and perfect works of Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Walker. Dr. Doddridge, in 1737-8, was called to officiate at the funeral of an old and worthy friend, the Rev. Mr. John Norris, of Welford in Northamptonshire, who had been thirty-eight years dissenting minister at that place. The discourse which the Doctor preached, and printed, on the occasion, is entitled, "Practical Reflections on the Character and Death of Enoch." On the ninth of November 1738, a day of fasting and prayer was observed at Willingborough, on account of a dreadful fire which had destroyed a considerable part of the town; and the sermon, which was assigned to Dr. Doddridge, and was in part delivered extempore, was published, from the best recollection he could make of it, at the earnest request of the hearers.

In 1739, our author gave to the public the first volume, in quarto, of his great work, "The Family Expositor; or a Paraphrase and Version of the New Testament: with critical Notes, and a practical Improvement of each Section." This volume contained the former part of the History of our Lord Jesus Christ, as recorded in the four Evangelists, disposed in the order of an harmony, and was ushered into the world by a very numerous and honourable list of subscribers. The dedication, which was to her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, affords one of the finest specimens which Dr. Doddridge has given of his talents in elegant composition. If the praises should be thought sufficiently copious, they are, at the same time, mixed with important hints of instruction; and nothing appears to be said but what evidently came from the heart. The second volume of the work was published in 1740, concluding the evangelical history. During these two years, the Doctor printed only one sermon,

which was on the "Necessity of a general Reformation in order to a well grounded Hope of Success in War;" and which had been preached by him at Northampton, on the ninth of January, 1739-40, being the day appointed by his Majesty for public humiliation. It was dedicated to his friend Colonel Gardiner. In 1741, our author was called upon to pay a tribute of respect to the memory of a worthy dissenting minister in London, the Rev. Mr. John Newman, by delivering an oration at his grave, and afterwards committing it to the press. Soon after, he published "The "Scripture Doctrine of Salvation by Grace through Faith, "illustrated and improved in two Sermons, the substance "of which was preached at Rowell in Northamptonshire." But the principal production of Dr. Doddridge, during this year, was a set of "Practical Discourses on Regeneration," which had been delivered on Sunday evenings, and attended with remarkable diligence, by many persons of different persuasions, to some of whom they were eminently useful. The character given of them by a foreign divine, on their being translated into Dutch, among other high encomiums, was, that they united orthodoxy with moderation, zeal with meekness, and deep hidden wisdom with uncommon clearness; that simplicity shone in them without coldness, elegance without painting, and sublimity without bombast.*

The publication of these discourses was succeeded by that of a single sermon, entitled, "The Evil and Danger of "neglecting the Souls of Men, plainly and seriously repre-"sented." It had been preached in October 1741, at a meeting of ministers, at Kettering in Northamptonshire. When published, which was in February 1741-2, it was dedicated to the associated Protestant Dissenting Ministers in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, with whom the author had an interview at Denton, in the preceding summer, and to whom he had proposed a scheme for the revival of religion, the heads of which are given in the dedication. The only composition from the pulpit which was printed by Dr. Doddridge in 1742, was a Charge, delivered in St. Ives,

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 118, 119.

Huntingdonshire, on the twelfth of August, at the ordination of Mr. John Jennings, the son of the Doctor's former tutor. In the latter end of the same year, our author began the publication of the sole controversial work in which he could properly ever have been said to have engaged. This was occasioned by a pamphlet, entitled, "Christianity not founded on argument," which was much spoken of at the time of its appearance, and which, under the form of a zeal for orthodoxy, contained a severe attack on our holy religion. Dr. Doddridge's answer was comprised in three letters, the second and third of which were published in 1743. In the first he stated the degree of rational evidence for the divine authority of Christianity, to which an illiterate well-disposed person may attain. The second was employed in endeavouring to shew the reasonableness of annexing a condemnatory sentence on unbelievers, as a part of the Christian revelation. In the third the doctrine of divine influences was considered.* These answers, which are written with the utmost politeness and candour, met with a very favourable reception in the world, and the Doctor was thanked for them by some men of distinguished rank and abilities. The last letter in particular was esteemed by many thinking persons to contain the best illustration, and the most rational and full defence of the influences of the Spirit upon the human heart, which had hitherto been published.† Dr. Doddridge's other publications in 1743 were, "The Principles "of the Christian Religion, expressed in plain and easy "Verse, and divided into short Lessons, for the Use of "Children and Youth;" and "Compassion to the Sick re-"commended and urged," in a sermon preached at Northampton in favour of a design for erecting a county hospital. In the first of these performances, which was drawn up at the request of Dr. Clark, it has justly been observed, that ease, plainness, and elegance, are happily united.‡ The verses, in general, are well accommodated to the purpose for which they were intended; but they might have had a

* Doddridge's Letters, p. 82.

† Orton, ubi supra, p. 113.

‡ Ib. p. 117.

still wider circulation, and have been more extensively useful, if no doctrine of a disputable nature had been introduced. There is some reason to believe, that they were made use of in the education of the royal children.* I have a full recollection of the zeal and activity with which Dr. Doddridge entered into the scheme of erecting an infirmary for Northamptonshire. The success of this design, was much owing to his exertions. His discourse in recommendation of it, which was dedicated to the Earl of Halifax, is indeed a most excellent one, and was characterised by Dr. Oliver, in a letter to the author, as follows: "Horace's observation, "*difficile est proprie communia dicere*, makes your sermon "on the erecting your county infirmary the more valuable. "Public charities have long been so trite a subject in the "pulpit, that we scarcely expect any thing new from the "ablest hands. But you, Sir, have treated this worn-out "subject in so masterly a manner, that the reader will find "many of his softest passions, awakened into tenderness "and compassion towards the sick and distressed, which "had slept benumbed under the warmest influences of the "preceding discourses on that affecting topic. You write "as if you felt, while some others seem to desire that their "brethren should feel, what themselves are insensible of. "They write from the head, but you from the heart."†

Towards the close of the same year, Dr. Doddridge became a member of a philosophical society which was formed at Northampton, consisting of several ingenious and respectable gentlemen in that town and its neighbourhood. During the course of their meetings in 1744, he exhibited two papers, the one on the Doctrine of Pendulums, and the other on the Laws of Communication of Motion, as well in elastic as in non-elastic bodies. The most material propositions relating to both, were set in so plain and easy a light in these papers, that he was requested to permit transcripts of them to be deposited among other communications of the gentlemen concerned, some of which appear to have been

* Letters, ubi supra, p. 89.

† Ibid. p. 261, 262.

curious and useful.* Our author's name occurs in the Transactions of the Royal Society. Three papers were written and communicated by him to that society, which, if they were not of the first consequence, serve to shew the activity of his mind, and his attention to different branches of science.

The year 1745 was distinguished in Dr. Doddridge's life by the appearance of one of the most popular, and one of the most useful of his practical works. This was "The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul," illustrated in a course of serious addresses, suited to persons of every character and circumstance, with a devout meditation or prayer added to each chapter. Dr. Watts had formed a similar design; but having been prevented from the execution of it by his growing infirmities, he recommended it to our author, as the best qualified of all his acquaintance for discharging it in the manner that would be acceptable and beneficial to the world. It was with some reluctance that Dr. Doddridge, amidst his various other weighty concerns, agreed to comply with the request of his venerable friend; but it was urged with an importunity that he could not resist; and he had afterwards the highest reason to rejoice in his compliance. When the work was finished, Dr. Watts revised as much of it as his health would permit. This book was not only well received by the Dissenters, but met with an equal reception, and the warmest applauses, from several persons of great eminence for rank, learning, and piety, both clergy and laity, in the established church.† Dr. Ayscough, formerly preceptor to the children of Frederic, Prince of Wales, speaking of it says, "I presented your last book to her royal Highness, and "ought long ago to have acquainted you with her most gra- "cious acceptance of it, and that I was commanded to re- "turn you her thanks for it. There is indeed such a spirit of "piety in it, as deserves the thanks of every good Christian. "Pray God grant it may have its proper effect in awaken- "ing this present careless age, and then I am sure you will

* Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. XVI. p. 475—477.

† Orton, ubi supra, p. 119, 120.

" have your end in publishing it."* Dr. Thomas Hunt, at that time of Hertford College, but afterwards Canon of Christ's Church, and Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Oxford, thus expressed himself concerning the same work: " With our thanks for the favour of your good " company, be pleased to accept of our most hearty ac- " knowledgments for your kind present of your excellent " piece on the Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul: " a performance which cannot fail of doing much good in " the world, as it is judiciously contrived to engage the at- " tention, and improve the minds of all sorts of readers; " being so plain as to be intelligible to the lowest under- " standing, at the same time that it is so elegant, as to gra- " tify the highest. You may assure yourself, Sir, that it " was not in the power of my most pressing engagements to " hinder me from reading such a work as this, and I hope " I am much the better for having done so. Nor would it " have been kind to my dear Mrs. Hunt, not to have given " her an opportunity of perusing a book, from which I my- " self had received so much benefit. I therefore no sooner " laid it out of my own hands, but I put it into her's, where " I afterwards often-times found it, and cannot easily tell " you how much she was affected by it, nor describe the " gratitude she professes to owe to her worthy instructor."† The Duchess of Somerset was equally pleased with the work. In a letter written to Dr. Doddridge in 1750, she says, " I " had not the pleasure of being acquainted with any of your " writings till I was at Bath, three years ago, with my poor " Lord, when an old acquaintance of mine, the Dowager Lady " Hyndford, recommended me to read the Rise and Progress " of Religion in the Soul: and I may with truth assure " you, that I never was so deeply affected with any thing I " ever met with as with that book; and I could not be easy " till I had given one to every servant in my house, who " appeared to be of a serious turn of mind."‡ A person of

* Letters to and from Dr. Doddridge, p. 321.
† Ibid. p. 335, 336. ‡ Ibid. p. 466.

distinguished literature and goodness always carried the work with him, declaring that it was every thing on the subject of serious and practical religion. It soon went through many editions, and still continues to be frequently reprinted. Nor has the publication of it been confined to England, but extended to Scotland and America. It has been translated abroad, and the author received many testimonies from foreign parts of its acceptance and usefulness.* If to such a number of encomiums the opinion of a dissenting minister may be subjoined, I may give the words of Mr. Barker: "That book should be written in all languages in letters of "gold.†"

Not, however, entirely to confine myself to the voice of praise, I cannot forbear adding some strictures that came from the pen of a particular and intimate friend of Dr. Doddridge's, Nathaniel Neal, Esq. an eminent Solicitor in London, who united the virtues of the heart with a very superior understanding and judgment, and who preserved the sincerest fidelity in the midst of the warmest affection. "I am," says he, in a letter to the author, "much obliged to you for "your kind present of the *Rise and Progress of Religion* "*in the Soul.* I read it over with pleasure, and hope not "without some advantage from a book, which I truly think "is calculated for very considerable usefulness. The serious "spirit it breathes must be acceptable to all who retain any "seeds of piety; and the compass of imagination, and force "of expression, which distinguish themselves throughout "the whole of the performance, show that the beauties of "the sacred writings are not despised by all the masters of "human eloquence. This might suffice for me to say con-"cerning a book that is so universally admired by those to "whose judgment and piety I pay the greatest reverence; "and all perhaps that in prudence I ought to say; if I mere-"ly consulted the preserving that credit you have hitherto "been so kind as to give to my understanding. But as I "had rather deserve your friendship than gain your applause,

* Orton, ubi supra. † Letters, ubi supra, p. 141.

" and be esteemed injudicious than insincere, I will venture " (since you have desired it) to send a remark or two on this " performance.

" Your book proposes to draw a plan of a religious dispo- " sition, or habit, from its first foundation to its highest per- " fection in the present state; and to consider it in its vari- " ous stages and circumstances, agreeably to that variety " which there is in the circumstances and attainments of " Christians. But is it not a just objection to this per- " formance, if there are many Christians who are consci- " ous to themselves that the foundation of their religious " temper and practice was not laid in those principles and " that view of things which you there describe? Which I " suppose must be the case of those who do not in a good " degree embrace the Calvinistical doctrines, and in some " measure of many that do: for I am inclined to think, that " different principles do not more variously affect and in- " fluence the minds of men, than the same principles do dif- " ferent minds, especially young ones, according to the " firmness or weakness of the mind, or as the prevailing turn " is sprightly or melancholy. Considering, therefore, the " state of the Christian church universally, may it not be " reasonable to allow a greater variety in the methods, which " divine wisdom and mercy take, to bring sinful men to the " love and practice of religion? You will observe, the ob- " jection does not infer, that the method you prescribe is " not the most general, or the best adapted to begin and " carry on the Christian life in the soul of man, but whether " it be the only one.

" If I might venture to add another remark, it should be " this: whether your rules and directions for promoting the " Christian life do not require more time to be spent in the " exercise of devotion and in the instrumental duties of re- " ligion, than is consistent with that attention to the affairs " of this life, which is necessary for the generality of Chris- " tians; and whether the proposing more to be done than " can (from a view of the capacities and opportunities of " Christians in general) be expected should be done, may

" not discourage some not to attempt, and others not to pro-
" ceed in a course of religion? What is fit to be done by
" some persons, and in some special circumstances, may not
" be expected from the greater number of Christians: and
" care should be taken, that the heights of piety, to which
" some devout souls have soared, do not become matter of
" discouragement to young Christians, or those of an or-
" dinary rank.

" It is not improbable that I, who read over this book with
" a view and desire to discover and amend my own faults,
" and not to find any in that, may not have sufficiently at-
" tended to some passages that may show both these re-
" marks impertinent; or if there are not such passages in
" this book, I myself can point out to some in other of your
" pieces, (particularly that on Regeneration, if my memory
" does not greatly fail me) which guard against both these
" objections in very clear and express terms. But what-
" ever be the fate of my remarks, when I venture to attack
" the accuracy of your compositions, I have a sure and tried
" retreat in the candour and benevolence of your disposition,
" which conceals all the weaknesses of your friends; and, I
" speak it from my own repeated experience, magnifies any
" well-intentioned attempt into an act or evidence of conspi-
" cuous wisdom or virtue.*"

In the summer of 1745, Dr. Doddridge printed a Charge, which had been delivered in Norwich, at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Abraham Tozer; and in the month of October, in the same year, he was called to the painful and affecting office of preaching a funeral sermon on the death of his friend, the Hon. Col. James Gardiner, who was slain in the battle at Preston-Pans, on the twenty-first of September preceding. The title of the discourse is " The Christian Warrior animated and crowned;" and it was accompanied with a dedication to the Colonel's pious and excellent widow. This sermon, as might be expected from the peculiar circumstances by which it was occasioned, had a very extensive cir-

* Ibid. p. 364—366.

culation; and it received, at the same time, many encomiums. "I thank you," says Mr. Barker, "for your fine "sermon on the lamentable death of that gallant Christian, "as well as soldier, Colonel Gardiner. I believe every "body will allow it to be a fine discourse, and grant that "your affection has not transported you beyond the bounds "of decency and prudence."* The applause of Dr. Hunt of Oxford was still more specific. "Many thanks to you "for your excellent sermon on the death of the valiant and "worthy Colonel Gardiner. I was most sensibly affected "with the perusal of it; nor can I easily tell you whether I "was more pleased with the ingenuity of the discourse, or "moved with the tenderness of the application. Both your "lamentation over your dead friend, and your moving "epistle to his disconsolate widow, are plainly formed on "Horace's plan *Si vis me flere*, &c. and therefore it is no "wonder they should draw tears from your readers, as, I assure you, they did not only from my dear Mrs. Hunt, but "myself, in great abundance. How mournfully pleasing to "Lady Frances must the honour you have done her gallant "consort be! And as for the deceased hero himself, methinks, I hear every brave soldier in the British army saluting his ashes (thus distinguished by your praises) in the "words of Alexander, when he stood before the tomb of "Achilles, and reflected on the honour that had been done "that famous warrior by Homer's verses,

"O fortunate Gardinere, qui tuæ virtutis
"Talem præconem inveneris!"

"At least, I am sure these would be their sentiments, were "your sermon put into their hands, as I could heartily wish "(for the animating the courage of the troops) it were. I "need not tell you how glad I should be to see the remarkable passages of a life, the conclusion of which is so glorious.*"

* Letters, ubi supra, p. 100. † Ibid. p. 337, 338.

Dr. Doddridge's next appearance from the press, was, likewise, in a funeral discourse, which was preached at Northampton, in May 1746, on occasion of the death of the Rev. Mr. James Shepherd. Mr. Shepherd was a worthy young minister, not quite twenty-two years of age, who died, in consequence of a short illness, soon after he had finished his academical studies, and had received an invitation to the pastoral charge of a dissenting congregation at Coggeshall, in Essex. Nine sermons, the whole which he had ever made, were collected together, and printed in a small volume, in 1748.

In 1747, Dr. Doddridge, agreeably to the promise he had before made, published "Some remarkable passages in the "Life of the Hon. Colonel James Gardiner;" a work which has gone through various editions. It was the author's design, in this work, not merely to perform a tribute of gratitude to the memory of an invaluable friend, but of duty to God and his fellow-creatures; as he had a cheerful hope that the narrative would, under the divine blessing, be the means of spreading a warm and lively sense of religion. Several of the Doctor's literary correspondents thought highly of the performance. "I own," says Mr. Barker, "I was not with-"out my fears, lest your love to that excellent person should "have overcharged some of your passages with panegyric; "and the extraordinary manner of his conversion have "given some occasion to the present age to charge him or "you with enthusiasm. But in reading the book I was "agreeably surprised and exceedingly pleased; and have the "satisfaction to acquaint you, that your friends here are of "opinion that you have performed what you have under-"taken in a most excellent manner, and that it is suited to "do a great deal of good.*" Mr. Neal, who wrote to the author before he had read the whole work, expressed himself in the following terms. "The receipt of Colonel Gardi-"ner's Life calls upon me for a particular acknowledgment. "I have yet only had the pleasure of reading some part of

* Letters, ubi supra, p. 109, 110.

" it; and though I know you would rather see me improved " by it, than hear me commend it, yet as the latter will, I " hope, be no obstruction to the former, I must own that, " as far as I have gone, I think it is written in a very in- " structive and entertaining manner; and I was charmed " with the dedication, the concluding period of which is " worthy the eloquence and politeness of Pliny, and the " piety and energy of St. Paul. But I will say no more till " I have perused the whole piece.*"

Perhaps it may be thought somewhat remarkable, that the learned Warburton should express the most unqualified approbation of the whole work. " I had the favour," says this eminent writer, " of your letter, and along with it Colonel " Gardiner's life, which I have just read through with very " great pleasure. Nothing can be better or more judicious " than the writing part. Many considerations made the " subject of great importance and expediency. The cele- " bration of worthy men who sacrificed themselves for the " service of their country; the tribute paid to private friend- " ship; the example, particularly to the soldiery, of so much " virtue and piety, as well as courage and patriotism; the " service done to the survivors of their families, are such " important considerations as equally concern the writer and " the public. I had a thousand things to remark in it which " gave me pleasure. But I have room but for two or three. " The distinction you settle between piety and enthusiasm " in the 78th page, is highly just and important, and very " necessary for these times, when men are apt to fall into " the opposite extremes. Nor am I less pleased with your " observations on the *mutilated form of Christianity*, in the " 130th page: we see the terrible effects of it. The " same pleasure your 162d and 163d pages afforded me. " Your hymns are truly pious and poetical. The note at " the bottom of page 176 is fine. I entirely agree with your " sentiments concerning the extraordinary circumstance of " the good man's conversion. On the whole, the book will

* Ibid. p. 370.

" do you honour; or, what you like better, will be a bles-
" sing to you by its becoming an instrument of public
" good."*

The chief observation that Mr. Orton makes on the work is, that " the author had the pleasure to hear of some " instances in which it had answered his desires and hopes; " though many thought, and perhaps justly, that he too " much indulged the emotions of private friendship and " affection in the composition."† In the truth of this remark I entirely concur. Colonel Gardiner was indeed a man of most excellent character; but that character was tinctured with enthusiasm and religious bigotry. His virtues were of the awful kind. I remember well that his aspect was the aspect of dignity; but this dignity was mixed with an austerity of appearance and manner, which was not prepossessing to the minds of the students belonging to the academy at Northampton. The affection of his eldest son to his father, had, I know, more of fear united with it than is usually desirable in a child towards a parent. Dr. Doddridge undoubtedly went too far, when, in his funeral sermon for Colonel Gardiner, he deliberately declared, that it was hard for him to say where, but in the book of God, the Colonel *found his example*, or where he had *left his equal*.‡ The Doctor was himself a superior character. Let it, however, be remembered, that if our author was somewhat extravagant in the praises of his friend, he said nothing of the truth of which he was not fully persuaded.

It is not my design to enter specifically into the story of Colonel Gardiner's extraordinary conversion. That the impression made upon his mind was in a dream, is sufficiently intimated to be the opinion of Dr. Doddridge, though the Colonel himself believed it to be a miraculous vision. As a dream it may very rationally be accounted for, from the predisposing circumstances. He had received a strictly pious edu-

* Letters, ubi supra, p. 204, 205.

† Orton, ubi supra, p. 114.

‡ Doddridge's Sermons, and religious Tracts, Vol. III. p. 62.

cation; he had never rejected the principles, though he had departed from the practice of Christianity; he often felt the anguish of his course of life; he was alone, in the solemn stillness of the night; a religious book happened to be opened by him; the dreadful crime in which he was going to engage flashed upon his conscience. Falling asleep in this agitation of his spirits, a dream followed, accommodated to his waking reflections. Nor was he, on this account, the less indebted to the goodnessof Divine Providence for the happy and effectual change that was produced in his disposition and conduct. The events which are derived through a succession of intermediate causes, are not less the result of the administration of the Supreme Being than more immediate interpositions. There cannot be a surer dictate of reason, than it is of scripture, that every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights.

Two pamphlets were published, containing remarks on the life of Colonel Gardiner; one in London, and the other at Edinburgh. The second was better written than the first; but neither of them was deemed of sufficient consequence to deserve an answer.*

In the year 1748 appeared the third volume of the "Family Expositor, containing the Acts of the Apostles, with "additional Notes on the Harmony of the Evangelists;" and "Two dissertations, 1. On Sir Isaac Newton's System of the "Harmony. 2. On the Inspiration of the New Testament." This volume is a very valuable part of Dr. Doddridge's great work; being executed with singular attention and diligence, and comprehending a large variety of curious and important critical remarks, together with excellent practical observations. In several momentous particulars he differed from Lord Barrington and Dr. Benson, and coincided in opinion with Dr. Lardner. Of this the latter gentleman took the following notice in a letter to our author: "You have happily thrown a great deal of light on the Acts of the Apostles. I am particularly obliged to you for the honourable

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 114—116.

" mention you have been pleased to make of me upon many " occasions. I likewise thank you for asserting and con- " firming the opinion that the Jews had not *Jus Gladii* in " the time of our Saviour. I am also well pleased to see " how clear you keep of the now common opinion about " *Proselytes of the Gate*, and how you sometimes overthrow " it by good reasons."* In the dissertation on Sir Isaac Newton's scheme for reducing the several histories contained in the Evangelists to their proper order, Dr. Doddridge successfully combats Sir Isaac's hypothesis upon the subject. But, at the same time, he gladly embraced the opportunity of paying him a very fine compliment. " I cannot," says the Doctor, " set myself to this task, without feeling the fa- " tigue of it sensibly allayed, by the pleasure with which I " reflect on the firm persuasion which a person of his un- " equalled sagacity must have entertained of the truth of " Christianity, in order to his being engaged to take such " pains in illustrating the sacred oracles. A pleasure which " I doubt not every good reader will share with me; espe- " cially as (according to the best information, whether pub- " lic or private, I could ever get,) his firm faith in the divine " revelation discovered itself in the most genuine fruits of " substantial virtue and piety; and consequently gives us the " justest reason to conclude, that he is now rejoicing in the " happy effects of it infinitely more than in all the applause " which his philosophical works have procured him; though " they have commanded a fame lasting as the world, the " true theory of which he had discovered, and (in spite of " all the vain efforts of ignorance, pride, and their offspring " bigotry) have arrayed him as it were in the beams of the " sun, and inscribed his name among the constellations of " heaven." Concerning Dr. Doddridge's Dissertation on the Inspiration of the Old Testament, Warburton pronounced, that it is a well reasoned and judicious performance.† Perhaps in some respects the reasoning may be rather too hypothetical; but, on the whole, it is a production which abounds with important and useful observations.

* Letters, ubi supra, p. 273. † Ibid. p. 205.

The only sermon published by Dr. Doddridge in 1748, was one entitled, "Christ's Invitation to thirsty souls." It had been preached nearly twenty years before at Northampton, and was now printed at the request of a worthy member of the established church, to whom it had been communicated in the intimacy of friendship. Prefixed to it is a dedication, of considerable length, to the Rev. James Hervey. This circumstance, if I conjecture rightly, did not please the strong-minded Warburton. "I think," says he, "you do not set a just value on yourself, when you "lend your name or countenance to such weak, but well-"meaning rhapsodies as ——. This may do well enough "with the people; but it is the learned that claim you. "And though the intermixing with works of this cast *sober* "books of devotion of your own composing, becomes your "character, and is indeed your duty, yet your charity and "love of goodness suffer you to let yourself down in the "opinion of those you most value, and whose high opinion "you have fairly gained by works of learning and reasoning "inferior to none. Forgive me this freedom.*" Dr. Hunt thought better, and indeed more justly, of the dedication; for he thus expressed himself, in a letter to the author: "Many thanks to you for your kind present of your ex-"cellent sermon. You have done great honour to our bro-"ther Hervey in the dedication, which breathes the true "spirit of Christian benevolence, and contains such gene-"rous and charitable sentiments as must charm every reader "that has any regard to the true interests of our most holy "religion. I think the account you give of the occasion of "the words (which is something in my way) is perfectly "just, and the method in which you have explained and "carried on the metaphor throughout, is in the highest de-"gree beautiful, as well as instructive."†

The first publication of Dr. Doddridge in 1749 was, "A "plan and serious Address to a Master of a Family on the "important Subject of Family Religion." This was accompanied with two prayers; one, which might be used as an

* Ibid. p. 205, 206. † Ibid. p. 346, 347.

introduction to a stated course of family-prayer, where it had formerly been neglected: and the other a prayer for a family, to be used either morning or evening, with such variations as might easily be understood by any who were able to read it. The Doctor, though a dissenter, and himself excelling in the variety and copiousness of more extemporaneous adorations, was not, we see, averse to forms of prayer on proper occasions. Indeed, he recommends them in his "Address," the seriousness, affection, and momentous nature of which entitle it to great attention and regard. The next appearance of our author from the press was in a discourse that had been preached at Northampton on the twenty-fifth of April 1749; being the day appointed by his Majesty for a general thanksgiving on account of the peace concluded with France and Spain. It was entitled, "Reflections on "the Conduct of Divine Providence in the Series and Con- "clusion of the late War;" and contains many beautiful and important observations, adapted to the circumstances of the time.

In 1749-50, Dr. Doddridge preached at a meeting of Ministers at Creaton, in Northamptonshire, and afterwards published a Sermon, the title of which is, "Christian Candour "and Unanimity stated, illustrated, and urged." This is an admirable discourse, and exhibits a fine transcript of the author's own mind, which was fully attuned to the virtue he recommended. It was inscribed to the Countess of Huntingdon, and strongly displays his admiration of that lady. I insert the inscription (which I am sure was written with the utmost sincerity), rather by way of warning than example; not as at all disputing the great excellency of the Countess's character, but because there is an excess in the language which ought to be applied to very few human beings:

"To the Right Honourable
"The Countess of Huntingdon,
"That eminent example of the
Christian Candour
"Here recommended,
"And of every other virtue and grace,

" Which can inspire, support, and adorn it,
" The AUTHOR
" Finding himself (after repeated attempts)
" Incapable of writing any dedication,
" Under the restraints which her humility,
" Amidst its utmost indulgence,
" Has prescribed him;
" Or to mention any excellence which would not
" Seem an encomium on *her*;
" Has chosen thus most respectfully
" To inscribe this discourse;
" Intreating that his farther silence,
" In this connection,
" May be interpreted by her LADYSHIP,
" And by every READER,
" As the most sensible and painful proof
" He can give of the deference,
" Veneration and grateful affection,
" With which he is, her Ladyship's
" Most obliged, and obedient humble servant."

On the twentieth of August 1750, Dr. Doddridge preached a sermon at Salter's-Hall, on the occasion of the late alarm by the second shock of an earthquake, which had happened on the eighth of March preceding. The discourse being delivered to a very large and attentive auditory, it was earnestly requested that it might be printed; and accordingly, it appeared under the title of " The Guilt and Doom of " Capernaum seriously recommended to the consideration " of the Inhabitants of London." Both the sermon and the preface amply show how solicitous our author was, with many other good men, to improve every event of Divine Providence to the best purposes. In the December of the same year, he was called upon to pay the last tribute of respect to the memory of his friend and father, Dr. Clark. That gentleman died on the fourth of the month, and on the sixteenth Dr. Doddridge, preached his funeral sermon at St. Alban's. The discourse is entitled, " Meditations on the " Tears of Jesus over the Grave of Lazarus;" and the cha-

racter given of Dr. Clark is as just as it is affectionate. It may not be improper to mention, that Dr. Clark was the author of a collection of Scripture Promises, which has been very useful to many pious Christians, and of three excellent sermons, on the Nature and Causes of Irresolution in Religion, printed in 1742. As a proof of the liberality of his mind, I shall transcribe a passage from one of his letters, written in 1727, to Mr. Doddridge. "You have seen, I "suppose, what the public prints inform us of, relating to "the proceedings of the General Assembly in Scotland, "against Mr. Patrick Simpson. They are going to deprive "that church of one of the most valuable persons in it, be- "cause he does not think it necessary to tie himself down "exactly to their Shibboleth, nor oblige himself to conform "to all the scholastic ways of speaking, concerning some "things, about which the scripture is silent. By what I "saw and heard of him when in Scotland, he is a much "better judge of those matters, than the greater part of "those who are to judge him. His crime is, that he is dis- "posed to think for himself; but yet he is very cautious to "avoid giving offence, which I perceive is, by the bigots, "interpreted cunning and dissimulation.

"One would think the experience of so many ages "should be sufficient to make the world wiser; and that "those who pretend to govern in the church, should learn "at last that their power might be much better exercised, "than in destroying the usefulness of the best men in it, "merely for nice speculations about unrevealed or disputa- "ble points. Suppose a person should not speak with ex- "act propriety, concerning the manner of Christ's existence, "a point so much above our reach, if yet he loves him, "trusts in him, and sincerely obeys him, what harm does "religion suffer by it? But I need not enlarge upon this to "you, who are so well instructed in the unreasonableness "of bigotry to a set of speculative notions."*

I have now specified the works that were published by

* Letters to and from the Rev. Dr. Doddridge, p. 17, 18.

Dr. Doddridge during his life-time in their chronological order, which has been neglected by Mr. Orton, and very much confounded in the three volumes containing the Doctor's Sermons and Religious Tracts. Such of his writings as were printed after his decease will hereafter be mentioned; and, therefore, it only remains at present to be added, that he was the author of a few small pieces which appeared in other collections. These were, some papers, when he was a young man, in "The present state of the Republic of Letters;" a recommendatory Preface to a performance, entitled, "Familiar Dialogues for children;" a biographical Preface to twelve Sermons, by the Rev. Thomas Steffe, a dissenting minister and former pupil, who died, in early life, at Taunton, in Somersetshire; an elaborate account, in "The History of the Works of the learned," of the second volume of Warburton's divine Legation of Moses; and an elegant practical Paraphrase of the last Words of David, according to the critical interpretation of Dr. Richard Grey, of Hinton, Northamptonshire.

I ought to have taken notice under the proper year (1748,) that Dr. Doddridge revised the "Expository Works" and other remains of Archbishop Leighton, and translated his "Latin Prelections." These were printed together at Edinburgh, in two volumes. Though the preparing of these volumes for the press took up some of the Doctor's time for several months, in the intervals of other business, he was far from repenting of his labour. The delight and edification which he found in the writings of this extraordinary man, were esteemed by him to be a full equivalent for his pains; separately from all the prospect of that effect which they might have upon others. He acknowledges in his preface, that he never spent a quarter of an hour in reviewing any of them, without feeling, amidst the interruption which a critical examination of the copy would naturally give, some impressions which he wished always to retain. Indeed, he found in them such heart-affecting lessons of simplicity and humility, candour and benevolence, and of exalted piety,

without the least tincture of enthusiasm, as he thought could scarcely be equalled any where else, excepting in the sacred oracles.*

Dr. Henry Miles, of Tooting, speaking of Archbishop Leighton's works, said, in a letter to Dr Doddridge, "I "bless God I ever met with them. There is a spirit in "them I never met with in any human writings, nor can I "read many lines in them without being affected: though "you know all his works are imperfect and inaccurate."† Scotland, in the middle of the last century, produced some divines, who had imbibed, in a wonderful manner, the genuine spirit of devotion, and the genuine spirit of Christianity. The name of Scougal will occur to every one who is tolerably acquainted either with the history of theology, or with compositions of a practical nature.

The journey which Dr. Doddridge took to St. Alban's, for the purpose of preaching Dr. Clark's funeral sermon, laid the foundation of his own death. In that journey, which, as we have seen before, was in December 1750, he unhappily contracted a cold, that hung upon him during the remainder of the winter. When the spring advanced, the disorder considerably abated; but in the summer it returned again with great violence. In this state of his health, he was advised by his physicians and friends to lay aside his public work for a time, and to apply himself to the use of proper medicines and exercise for the removal of his complaint. With the former part of this advice he could not be prevailed upon to comply; for, in his estimation, to be useless was worse than death. Whilst he apprehended that there was no immediate danger, he could not be induced to decline, or even to lessen, the various sacred employments in which he so much delighted; and he was particularly desirous to complete the fair transcript of his Family Expositor. The nearer he approached to his dissolution, the more plainly was observed his continual improvement in a spiritual and heavenly temper. Indeed, he seemed to have gotten above the world, and to be daily breathing after immortality. This disposition of his mind was ardently ex-

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 145. † Letters, ubi supra, p. 219.

pressed in several of his letters, and is manifest from his will, which was made at this time, and is prefaced in the following language: "Whereas it is customary on these occasions "to begin with commending the soul into the hands of God "through Christ; I do it, not in mere form, but with sincerity and joy; esteeming it my greatest happiness, that I "am taught and encouraged to do it, by that glorious gospel, which, having most assuredly believed, I have spent "my life in preaching to others; and which I esteem an infinitely greater treasure than all my little worldly store, or "possessions ten thousand times greater than mine."*

The last time that Dr. Doddridge administered the Lord's Supper to his congregation at Northampton, was on the second of June 1751. In the sermon which he delivered previously to the celebration of the ordinance, and which was from Hebrews xii. 23, he expatiated on the illustrious and innumerable assembly that would meet together in the celestial world; and in the conclusion of the whole service, he mentioned, with marks of uncommon pleasure, the authority of Christ over ministers and Churches. He dropped, likewise, some hints of his approaching decease, and spoke with great tenderness and affection to his people on the prospect of their final separation. After this he spent some weeks in London, where the hurries and fatigues he went through contributed to increase his disorder. On his return from the metropolis, which was nearly the middle of July, he determined, notwithstanding the earnest intreaties of his friends to the contrary, to address his flock once more from the pulpit. The discourse, which proved in fact to be his farewell sermon, was from Romans xiv. 8, and was well adapted, not only to the state of his congregation, but to that of his pupils, for whose future improvement and welfare he was tenderly concerned.

The last public service, in which Dr. Doddridge was ever engaged, was on the eighteenth of July, at the ordination of the Reverend Mr. Adams, at Bewdley, in Worcestershire.

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* Orton, ubi supra, p. 268—271.

How unfit he was at this time for taking any part in the duties of the day, was displayed in his pale countenance, and in his languid trembling voice; but he had promised his assistance, and was unwilling to be absent or unemployed on the occasion. From Bewdley he went to Shrewsbury, where he resided several weeks, at the house of his friend Mr. Orton, for the convenience of air, exercise, and an entire recess from business and company. By this retirement he seemed to be a little recruited. Whilst he was at Shrewsbury, he received many letters from his friends, expressive of their high esteem and affection for him, and of their deep concern for his dangerous illness.* A very pathetic one, written by Mr. Neal, will be found in the collection lately published. Part of what he wrote is as follows: "You may be sure, we are all "greatly affected with the danger that threatens a life so "universally desirable, and to us so peculiarly endeared: "and our invaluable friend (Mr. Barker) dissolved not "only us, but great part of his numerous audience, into "tears, by a kind of inspired eloquence, with which he of-"fered up strong pleas and cries, for your support and re-"vival, to him who is able to deliver from death.—My dear "friend, I beseech you not to think of returning to Nor-"thampton, even though you should receive all imaginable "benefit at Shrewsbury in the ensuing fortnight, till you "have visited Bristol; and in preparing for the expedition, "I conceive no time should be lost, as the season for the "waters, as well as of the year, is so far advanced. I should "tremble for your return to Northampton at present, not-"withstanding some encouraging symptoms; for a relapse "could hardly fail of being fatal, and in such a circumstance "would be next to certain, considering your various en-"gagements and active temper." Speaking of the academy, Mr. Neal adds, "Mr. Clark, I am persuaded, is able "to do what is fully sufficient, and will be very acceptable "to the trustees. And I rejoice in his ability, (which I do "not at all distrust) to keep the pupils very profitably em-"ployed for some time; though I should much rather hear

* Ibid. p. 271—274.

" the academy was all disbanded, than that you should read " a single lecture between this and Michaelmas. In one " word, your whole duty to God and man is comprehended " in the care of your health.*" Another letter, written some weeks before by Mr. Barker, though it has been inserted, at large, both in the Collection mentioned above and in Mr. Orton's Memoirs, is too interesting to be omitted in this " place. " Lessingham, Neal, and Barker, are too nearly in- " terested in that precious life, which now appears in danger " of being cut off in the midst of its days, to hear of its waste " and languishing without great concern and fervent prayer " to God. How your letter affected my heart in public, " your friends are witness: but what I felt for my dear bro- " ther and the ministers and churches of Christ, God and " myself only know. I will not now say, Why did you " spend so fast? Why did you not spare yourself a little " sooner? I will rather heartily thank you, that you use all " the means you can to repair your frame, and restore and " prolong your usefulness. It is the kindest thing you can " do, and the highest instance of friendship you can now shew " us; and I acknowledge your goodness to us in this point " with tears of joy. Consent and choose to stay with us a " while longer, my dear friend, if it please God. This is " not only needful to Northampton and its adjacent towns " and villages, but desirable to us all, and beneficial to our " whole interest. Stay, Doddridge! O, stay and strengthen " our hands, whose shadows grow long. Fifty is but the " height of vigour, usefulness, and honour. Don't take " leave abruptly. Providence hath not directed thee yet on " whom to drop thy mantle. Who shall instruct our youth, fill " our vacant churches, animate our associations, and diffuse a " spirit of piety, moderation, candour, and charity, through " our villages and churches; and a spirit of prayer and sup- " plication into our towns and cities, when thou art removed " from us? Especially, who shall unfold the sacred Oracles, " teach us the meaning and use of our Bibles, rescue us from

* Letters, ubi supra, p. 396, 397.

" the bondage of systems, party-opinions, empty, useless
" speculations, and fashionable forms and phrases; and point
" out to us the simple, intelligible, consistent, uniform re-
" ligion of our Lord and Saviour? Who shall—But I am
" silenced by the voice of him, who says, " Shall I not do
" what I will with my own? Is it not my prerogative to take
" and leave, as seemeth me good? I demand the liberty of
" disposing of my own servants at my own pleasure. He
" hath laboured more abundantly. His times are in my hand.
" He hath not slept as do others. He hath risen to nobler
" heights than things below. He hopes to inherit glory.
" He hath laboured for that which endureth to eternal life;
" labour, which the more it abounds, the more it exalts and
" magnifies its object, and the more effectually answers and
" secures its end. It is yours to wait and trust,—mine to dis-
" pose and govern. On me be the care of ministers and
" churches. With me is the residue of the Spirit. Both
" the vineyard and the labourers are mine. I set them to
" work; and when I please, I call them and give them their
" hire."—With these thoughts my passions subside, my
" mind is softened and satisfied, I resign thee, myself and
" all, to God, saying, Thy will be done! But now for the
" wings of faith and contemplation. Let me take thy hand,
" my dear brother, and walk a turn or two in yonder spacious
" regions. Yes, it is so: we read it in the Book of God,
" that word of truth and gospel of our salvation, that as in
" Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.
" The one ruined his posterity by sin; the other raised his
" seed to immortality. This poisoned the dart and inflam-
" ed the wound of death; but Jesus Christ redeemeth us
" from this captivity. See, thou Christian minister, thou
" friend of my bosom, and faithful servant of God, see the
" important period, when the surprising signs, and descend-
" ing inhabitants of heaven, proclaim the second coming of
" our divine Saviour! The heavens open and disclose his ra-
" diant glory. Hear the awakening trump. See, the dead
" in Christ arise glorious and immortal; leave corruption,

" weakness, and dishonour, behind them, and behold their " Lord and Head seated on his throne of judgment, attend- " ed and surrounded with the ministers of his power and " pleasure, and shining in all the fulness of celestial glory: " and not only see but share his victory and lustre, partake " of his image and influence. And behold the demolished " fabric reared again, stately and ornamented, shining and " illustrious, permanent and durable, to demonstrate how " entirely death is vanquished, all its ruins repaired; and " what was once meat for worms, is now a companion of an- " gels: for when " this corruptible shall have put on incor- " ruption, and this mortal immortality," every eye will be fas- " tened on the mighty conqueror, and every voice and harp " be tuned for that transporting song, " O Death, where is " thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?" Yes, Dod- " dridge, it is so. The fruit of our Redeemer's sufferings " and victory is the entire and eternal destruction of sin and " death. And is it not a glorious destruction? A most bles- " sed ruin? No enemy so formidable, no tyranny so bitter, " no fetters so heavy and galling, no prison so dark and dis- " mal, but they are vanquished and disarmed; the unerring " dart is blunted and broken, the prison pulled down and " rased. Our Lord is risen, as the first-fruits of them that " slept.—How glad should I be to hear, that God is pleased " to prolong thy life on earth, to declare these glorious " truths, and teach us to improve them! In this, your " friends with you, and many more in every place, join, " and make it our common petition to the great Disposer of " all events. Use every means you can for the recovery of " your health, for the sake of your friends, among whom is " your faithful and affectionate J. BARKER."*

Dr. Doddridge was so deeply affected with the friendship expressed in this letter, and the Divine consolations which it administered, that there was reason to be apprehensive that his tender frame would have sunk under the emotions of his gratitude and joy.

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 274—277. Letters, ubi supra, p. 142—145.

In autumn, his physicians judged it proper that he should make a trial of the waters of Bristol; and accordingly he went thither in the month of August. Upon his arrival at that place, a worthy clergyman of the established church, with whom he had only a slight acquaintance, entertained him in the most hospitable manner, and with a fraternal affection, till he could be accommodated with suitable apartments near the wells: and Dr. Maddox, Bishop of Worcester, paid him a friendly visit, and, in very obliging terms, offered to convey him in his chariot, at the stated times of drinking the water. Little hope of his deriving benefit from it was given him by the physicians at Bristol; and he received their report of the great hazard of his case with a fortitude, resignation, and cheerfulness, which never forsook him to the last, in any place, or on any occasion. Here he met with several of his friends, who were desirous to do all in their power to testify their regard for him; and offers of service and assistance were made to him by strangers, and even by persons who had formerly conceived prejudices against him; a worthy nobleman interested himself as kindly about the Doctor's health, as if he had long been his intimate friend. Whilst Dr. Doddridge was at Bristol, he was visited by some of the principal people of his congregation, who expressed an affection for him not to be described, and who brought with them assurances of the same affection from the rest of his flock, and of their ardent and repeated prayers for his recovery. This new proof of their regard afforded him great satisfaction and refreshment. He was directed by his physicians to speak and write as little as possible; but he could not content himself without sometimes sending letters in short-hand, to a few chosen friends, expressive of the excellent frame of his mind.*

The health of Dr. Doddridge continuing still more and more to decline, he was advised, as the last resort to so threatening a disorder, to remove to a warmer climate for the winter. It was proposed that he should go to Lisbon. In deliberat-

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 277—281

ing upon this scheme, his principal objection to it was the great expence with which the execution of it would necessarily be attended. He doubted whether, with so very precarious a hope of its being beneficial to him, he ought to pursue the design; when his family, which, in case of his decease, would be but slenderly provided for, would be considerably injured by the voyage. "It will," says Mr. Orton, "I hope, appear to every considerate reader, a glorious "circumstance in the Doctor's life, that it was sacrificed to "the generous, disinterested service of his great Master, and "benevolence to mankind; that, with the advantage of a "genius and qualifications equal to the highest advancement "in the establishment, and without being chargeable with "want of economy, he should find himself under the painful necessity of preserving the little remainder of his life, "by an expence disproportionate to the provision made for "his family, dear to him as his own life." There happened to be at Bristol a clergyman of the church of England, who had not been previously acquainted with Dr. Doddridge, but who behaved to him in the kindest and most respectful manner. In conversation with this gentleman, the Doctor undesignedly threw out a hint of the principal reason which caused him to demur about the voyage. The benevolent clergyman immediately seized the hint, and took an opportunity of expressing, before a lady of considerable fortune, who was a Dissenter, his esteem and respect for the Doctor, and the concern it gave him, that a person who did so much honour to Christianity in general, and to his own denomination in particular, and who (as he was pleased to express himself) "if his conscience had not prevented, might have been "in one of the first dignities in their church," should on account of his circumstances, be discouraged from taking a step, on which perhaps his life depended. He added, that, in his opinion, it would be an everlasting reproach upon the Dissenters as a body, if those who knew of his situation did not take some speedy and vigorous measures to remove the difficulty. No sooner had this gentleman given the hint, and set a handsome precedent, than it was cheerfully pursued;

and the generosity of Dr. Doddridge's acquaintance at Bristol and in other places, fully equalled his wants and his wishes. Mr. Neal was particularly active in the management of the affair, and had the pleasure of informing the Doctor, that instead of selling what our author had in the funds, he should be able, through the benevolence of friends, to add something to it, after the expence of the voyage was defrayed.

Whilst Dr. Doddridge continued at Bristol, and his journey was in prospect, many other pleasing circumstances occurred, which tended to lighten his affliction. A servant, in particular, of the family where he lodged, offered herself to attend him to Lisbon on very reasonable terms; a proposal which was the more seasonable and acceptable, as infirm persons, who designed the same voyage, usually found it extremely difficult to procure such attendance, even by large offers.* Dr. Oliver was at no small pains to prepare every thing for making the journey as comfortable as possible; and Mr. Warburton prevailed upon the secretary of the Post-Office to write to the captain of the packet-boat at Falmouth, to engage him to give Dr. Doddridge the best accommodations in his power.† On the seventeenth of September, the Doctor left Bristol, and after a fatiguing journey of ten days, occasioned partly by the badness of the season and roads, and partly by his great weakness, he arrived at Falmouth. There he was received in the kindest manner by Dr. Turner, the physician of the place, who generously entertained him in his house, and recommended him to the care of his nephew, Dr. Cantley, at Lisbon. During Dr. Doddridge's journey and stay at Falmouth, his most painful and threatening symptoms had been suspended; but, on the night before he sailed, they returned with greater violence than ever. Mrs. Doddridge, therefore, thought it necessary to propose, that he should either return home, or stay a while longer at Falmouth. Having, however, some hope from a change of climate, he gave this short answer. "The "die is cast, and I choose to go."

* Ibid. p. 281—287 † Letters, ubi supra, p. 264.

The propriety of Dr. Doddridge's voyage to Lisbon has by some persons been doubted; but in this undertaking he acted by the unanimous advice of the most competent judges. At Falmouth much civility was shewn him by several of the inhabitants of the place, to whom his friends had written for that purpose, and he parted from them with the utmost gratitude and tenderness. On Monday the thirtieth of September he went on board the packet; and as the captain of it did not happen to go the voyage, the Doctor had the convenience of his cabin, which was no small comfort and advantage to him in his weak condition. Upon the sailing of the vessel, the new scene which opened upon him, and the soft air and fresh breezes of the sea, had the most pleasing effect on his spirits. The sea sickness was severely felt by Mrs. Doddridge and the servant; but happily he himself did not suffer from it; so that he needed their attendance and assistance less than before. He generally sat, the greatest part of the day, in an easy chair, in the captain's cabin; and his mind was admirably sustained by delightful views of the heavenly world. Such sacred gratitude and joy appeared in his countenance, as often brought to the remembrance of his lady the following lines of one of his hymns:

> When Death o'er Nature shall prevail,
> And all the pow'rs of language fail,
> Joy through my swimming eyes shall break,
> And *mean* the thanks I cannot speak.

In the Bay of Biscay the vessel was unhappily becalmed for some days; and the weather proved so intensely hot, that Dr. Doddridge's colliquative sweats returned, attended with a faintness that threatened his speedy dissolution. Providence, however, still lengthened out the feeble thread of life. When the ship came to the desired haven, and was waiting for the usual ceremonies of entrance, the fineness of the day, the softness of the air, and the delightful prospects by which he was surrounded, gave him a fresh flow of strength and spirits. He stayed upon deck about

two hours, and derived from it such a sensible degree of refreshment, as to raise even a flattering hope of his recovery. On Sunday the thirteenth of October he landed at Lisbon. The next day he wrote to his assistant at Northampton, giving him a short account of his voyage, of the magnificent appearance which the city made from the sea, and of what he observed in passing through the streets. After mentioning his great weakness and danger, he added, "Nevertheless, I bless God, the most undisturbed serenity continues "in my mind, and my strength holds in proportion to my "day. I still hope and trust in God, and joyfully acquiesce in all he may do with me. When you see my "dear friends of the congregation, inform them of my "circumstances, and assure them that I cheerfully submit "myself to God. If I desire life may be restored, it is "chiefly that it may be employed in serving Christ among "them; and that I am enabled by faith to look upon death "as an enemy that shall be destroyed; and can cheerfully "leave my dear Mrs. Doddridge a widow in a strange land, "if such be the appointment of our heavenly Father. I "hope I have done my duty, and the Lord do as seemeth "good in his sight."*

At Lisbon, Dr. Doddridge was kindly received and entertained at the house of Mr. David King, an English merchant, whose mother was one of the Doctor's congregation, and who had now an opportunity he could never have expected, but which he gladly embraced, of repaying the many services that had been done for his relations at Northampton. In this worthy family our author found the most cordial friendship, and every accommodation that could tend to alleviate his disorder. Here he happened to meet with Dr. Watts's Treatise on the Happiness of separate Spirits, which being a work entirely coincident with his own sentiments, delighted him in a peculiar manner. In reading this book, Dr. Watts's Hymns, and especially the Scriptures, he employed as much time as his strength would admit. At Lisbon he found a family related to Mrs. Doddridge, as well

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 290—293.

as other kind friends, who, either from a knowledge of his character, or from having received voluntary letters of recommendation, shewed him all the civility in their power, and indeed seemed to strive who should most excel in displaying for him an assiduous and tender regard. From their company he derived pleasure, though it was attended with the painful circumstance of his not being able to converse with them as freely as he could have wished to have done. The Rev. Mr. Williamson in particular, then chaplain to the British Factory, frequently visited him, with the temper and behaviour of the gentleman, the Christian, and the divine.

About a week after Dr. Doddridge's arrival, by the advice of his physician, Dr. Cantley, who attended him without receiving the usual fees, he was removed into the country, a few miles from Lisbon. This, however, was productive of no advantage; for the rainy season, which in that climate usually sets in about the latter end of October, came on with such uncommon violence, as not only to preclude any assistance from air and exercise, but to add greatly to his complaints. On the twenty-fourth of October, he was seized with a colliquative diarrhœa, which soon exhausted his little strength. Nevertheless, during the succeeding night, which seemed the last of rational life, he preserved the same calmness, vigour, and joy of mind, which he had felt and expressed through the whole of his illness. The only pain he had in the thought of dying, was the fear of that grief and distress which Mrs. Doddridge would suffer from his removal. To his children, his congregation, and his friends in general, he desired to be remembered in the most affectionate manner; nor did he forget the family where he lodged, or his own servant, in the effusions of his pious benevolence. Many devout sentiments and aspirations were uttered by him; but Mrs. Doddridge's heart was too much affected with his approaching change, to be able to recollect them distinctly. On the following day he lay in a gentle dose, in which he continued till an hour before his death. At the last struggle he appeared restless, and fetched several deep sighs, soon after which he obtained his release. This

event took place on Saturday, the twenty-sixth of October, old stile, about three o'clock in the morning; and though he died in a foreign land, and in a certain sense among strangers, his decease was embalmed with many tears. Not only the principal gentlemen of the factory, but even their servants, manifested a high sense of Dr. Doddridge's worth, and of the greatness of the public loss. A circumstance which afforded much satisfaction to Mrs. Doddridge, and her Lisbon friends, was, that the Doctor, in his last scenes, was not molested by the officious zeal of any of the priests of the church of Rome. Agreeably to the desire which he had expressed before his death, his body was opened, when his lungs were found in so ulcerated a state, that it appeared surprising to the physician, that his speaking and breathing had not been far more difficult and painful to him than in fact they were, even to the last.

Dr. Doddridge had frequently expressed a wish of being buried at his meeting-place at Northampton, where his children and so many of his congregation and friends were deposited. However, during his illness, he spoke of this as a matter quite indifferent to him; and, to avoid increasing the distress of his afflicted consort, was desirous of being interred whereever he should die. It was found, upon inquiry, that the removal of the body to England, would occasion a very large expence, and therefore it was judged most prudent to decline it. Accordingly, his remains were conveyed to the burying-ground belonging to the British factory at Lisbon, with as much decency and respect as circumstances and the place would admit. The greater part of the gentlemen of the factory attended his funeral; and Mr. Williamson, on the following Sunday, preached a sermon, in which he gave him a high and honourable character, founded on what he had heard from many, of his worth, and on what he had himself seen, during the opportunities he had had of conversing with him.*

Though Dr. Doddridge's congregation had not the melancholy satisfaction of having him interred at his own meeting-

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 293, 297.

house, they erected in it a handsome monument to his memory, and made a generous present to his widow after her return. The inscription, which was drawn up by the Doctor's much esteemed and ingenious friend, Gilbert West, Esq. was as follows:

To the memory of
PHILIP DODDRIDGE, D. D.
Twenty-one years Pastor of this church,
Director of a flourishing Academy,
And Author of many excellent Writings;
By which
His pious, benevolent, and indefatigable zeal
To make men wise, good, and happy,
Will far better be made known,
And perpetuated much longer,
Than by this obscure and perishable marble;
The humble monument, not of his praise,
But of their esteem, affection, and regret,
Who knew him, loved him, and lament him;
And who are desirous of recording,
In this Inscription,
Their friendly but faithful testimony
To the many amiable and Christian virtues,
That adorned his more private character;
By which, though dead, he yet speaketh,
And, still present in remembrance,
Forcibly, though silently, admonisheth
His once-beloved and ever-grateful flock,
He was born June 26, 1702.
And died Oct. 26, 1751,
Aged 50.*

The situation of Mrs. Doddridge, during the sad scene through which she passed, will justly be considered as peculiarly melancholy and affecting. She had accompanied her husband to a foreign land, and had been witness to the painful event of his death. Through the goodness of God she was enabled to preserve fortitude and serenity in the midst

* Ibid. p. 298.

of her deep affliction. What the state of her mind was, is finely represented in a letter which she wrote to her children from Lisbon, a few days after the Doctor's decease, and which has lately been printed, for the first time, in the Gentleman's Magazine. It will be found below.* In her voy-

* "My dear children, *Lisbon, Nov.* 11. *N. S.* 1751.

"How shall I address you under this awful and melancholy providence! I would fain say something to comfort you. And I hope "God will enable me to say something that may alleviate your deep "distress. I went out in a firm dependence that, if Infinite Wisdom was pleased to call me out to duties and trials as yet unknown, "he would grant me those superior aids of strength that would "support and keep me from fainting under them; persuaded that "there was no distress or sorrow, into which he could lead me, under which his gracious and all-sufficient arm could not support "me. He has not disappointed me, nor suffered the heart and "eyes directed to him to fail. "God all-sufficient, and my only "hope," is my motto; let it be yours. Such, indeed, have I found "him; and such, I verily believe, you will find him too in this time "of deep distress.

"Oh! my dear children, help me to praise him! Such supports, "such consolations, such comforts, has he granted to the meanest "of his creatures, that my mind, at times, is held in perfect astonishment, and is ready to burst into songs of praise under its most exquisite distress.

"As to outward comforts, God has withheld no good thing from "me, but has given me all the assistance, and all the supports, that "the tenderest friendship was capable of affording me, and which I "think my dear Northampton friends could not have exceeded. "Their prayers are not lost. I doubt not but I am reaping the benefit of them, and hope that you will do the same.

"I am returned to good Mr. King's. Be good to poor Mrs. King. "It is a debt of gratitude I owe for the great obligations I am under "to that worthy family here. Such a solicitude of friendship was "surely hardly ever known as I meet with here. I have the offers "of friendship more than I can employ; and it gives a real concern "to many here that they cannot find out a way to serve me. "These are great honours conferred on the dear deceased, and great "comforts to me. It is impossible to say how much these mercies

age homeward, and upon her return to her family, she was strengthened and supported beyond what could have been

" are endeared to me, as coming in such an immediate manner from " the Divine Hand. To his name be the praise and glory of all!

" And now, my dear children, what shall I say to you? Ours is " no common loss. I mourn the best of husbands and of friends, re- " moved from this world of sin and sorrow to the regions of immor- " tal bliss and light. What a glory! what a mercy is it that I am " enabled with my thoughts to pursue him there! You have lost the " dearest and best of parents, the guide of your youth! and whose " pleasure it would have been to have introduced you into life with " great advantages.

" Our loss is great indeed! But I really think the loss the public " has sustained is still greater. But God can never want instruments " to carry on his work. Yet, let us be thankful that God ever gave " us such a friend; that he has continued him so long with us. " Perhaps, if we had been to have judged, we should have thought " that we nor the world could never less have spared him than at " the present time. But I see the hand of Heaven, the appoint- " ment of his wise providence, in every step of this awful dispensa- " tion. It is his hand that has put the bitter cup into ours. And " what does he now expect from us but a meek, humble, entire sub- " mission to his will? We know this is our duty. Let us pray for " those aids of his Spirit, which can only enable us to attain it. A " father of the fatherless is God in his holy habitation; as such may " our eyes be directed to him! He will support you. He will com- " fort you. And that he may, is not only my daily, but hourly " prayer.

" We have never deserved so great a good as that we have lost. " And let us remember, that the best respect we can pay to his me- " mory is to endeavour, as far as we can, to follow his example, to " cultivate those amiable qualities that rendered him so justly dear " to us, and so greatly esteemed by the world. Particularly I " would recommend this to my dear P. May I have the joy to see " him acting the part worthy the relation to so amiable and excel- " lent a parent, whose memory, I hope, will ever be valuable and " sacred to him and to us all! Under God, may he be a comfort to " me, and a support to the family! Much depends on him. His loss " I think peculiarly great. But I know an all-sufficient God can " overrule it as the means of the greatest good to him.

expected. By the circumstance of Dr. Doddridge's dying abroad she lost a considerable annuity, which he had provided for her in case of widowhood, and to which she would otherwise have been entitled. To this consequence of his voyage, should he die abroad, the Doctor was totally a stranger; and it was happy for him that he was never acquainted with it, since it must have lien with weight upon his spirits. The generosity of his friends was active to compensate for the loss which Mrs. Doddridge had sustained. A subscription was opened for her, chiefly in London, and, in a great measure, under the direction of Mr. Neal, whose kind offices to Dr. Doddridge's family were eminent and

" It is impossible for me to tell you how tenderly my heart feels " for you all! how much I long to be with you to comfort and as- " sist you. Indeed, you are the only inducements I now have left " to wish for life, that I may do what little is in my power to form " and guide your tender years. For this purpose I take all possible " care of my health. I eat, sleep, and converse at times with a " tolerable degree of cheerfulness. You, my dears, as the best re- " turn you can make me, will do the same, that I may not have sor- " row upon sorrow. The many kind friends you have around you, " I am sure, will not be wanting in giving you all, the assistance " and comfort that is in their power. My kindest salutations attend " them all.

" I hope to leave this place in about fourteen or twenty days. " But the soonest I can reach Northampton will not be in less than " six weeks or two months time. May God be with you, and give " us, though a mournful, yet a comfortable meeting! For your sakes " I trust my life will be spared. And, I bless God, my mind is " under no painful anxiety as to the difficulties and dangers of the " voyage.

" The winds and the waves are in his hands, to whom I resign " myself, and all that is dearest to me. I know I shall have your " prayers, and those of my dearest friends with you.

" Farewel, my dearest children! I am your afflicted, but most sin- " cere friend, and ever affectionate mother,

" M. Doddridge." *

* Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. LXI. p. 884, 885.

invariable. In a short time a sum was raised, which was more than equal to the forfeiture of the annuity. Besides this, Mrs. Doddridge received several other handsome presents, which were sent her as subscriptions to the Family Expositor, from persons of rank, both among the clergy and laity of the established church. The manner in which these benefactions were communicated heightened their value. They were bestowed with so much delicacy, and reflected such high honour on Dr. Doddridge's memory, that she retained a deep impression of them to the latest hour of her life. Another instance of regard that was paid her, was, that the dissenting ministers in the neighbourhood of Northampton, and the pupils who had begun to preach, supplied the Doctor's congregation, during his absence, and for half a year after his decease, that the salary might be continued to his family for that time.*

Dr. Doddridge's funeral sermon was preached by Mr. Orton, who was in every view the properest person for that service. On what day it was delivered does not appear from the copy now lying before me. The text was, 1 Cor. xv. 54, and the words, "Death is swallowed up in victory." In a short time the discourse was published, and had an extensive circulation, under the title of "The Christian's Triumph over Death." It has since been annexed to the three volumes of the Doctor's Sermons and religious Tracts. Mr. Orton did not enter largely into the character of his revered and beloved friend, having probably then formed the design of writing his life.

The muses were not silent on Dr. Doddridge's decease. A poem to his memory was published by a young gentleman, who, at the time of composing it, was a pupil at his academy. The author was Mr. Henry More, who afterwards settled in Devonshire, of which county he is a native, and who is now a dissenting minister at Leskard in Cornwall. By his friends he is known not only to be an ingenious poet, but a sound scholar, especially in Biblical criticism. The

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 229, 300.

following lines will afford an agreeable specimen of the merit of the poem:

Her bays each science scatters on thy bier;
Each social virtue drops the friendly tear.
Beneath a mould'ring temple's awful shade,
Among the solemn nodding ruins laid,
Religion weeps; her bosom swell'd with care
Heaves the sad sigh, half yielding to despair;
But cheerful faith sustains her drooping head,
And whispers comfort to the fainting maid.
But ah! what power of language can express
The widow'd consort's woe? What keen distress
Tore all her heart-strings, when thy trembling sight
Snatch'd a fond, farewel glance, and clos'd in night?
When the felt pulse, that at her touch before
Beat with a fuller tide, now throbb'd no more?
In foreign lands, abandon'd, and alone,
She heard a darling husband's parting groan:
No children there receiv'd his last command,
Wept round the couch, and kiss'd his dying hand:
No sad domestic bore the sable bier;
No mournful pupil pour'd the tender tear:
No soothing friend to minister relief,
And, by dividing, mitigate her grief:
She solitary brooded o'er her care,
Her only refuge plac'd in Heav'n and prayer,
And when, her native country to regain,
She measur'd back the wide extended main,
As the fleet vessel flew before the wind,
How many a melting look she turn'd behind!
How, till in undistinguish'd vapour lost,
Caught each faint glance of the receding coast,
Where now, for ever from her eyes remov'd,
Lie the blest relics of the man she lov'd!
That dear sad sight she never more must view,
Her longing eyes have look'd their last adieu:
That dear sad sight she wishes now in vain,
While ocean rolls unnumber'd waves between.

Dr. Doddridge was not handsome in his person. In stature he was somewhat above the middle size, with a stoop in his shoulders, and he was very thin and slender. But when he was engaged in conversation, or employed in the pulpit, there was a remarkable sprightliness and vivacity in his countenance and manner, which commanded a general attention.* Mrs. Doddridge survived her husband nearly forty years, all which time she exhibited an eminent pattern of the Christian virtues. She departed this life at Tewkesbury, in Glocestershire, where she had long resided. The Doctor left four children, one son, and three daughters. Philip, the son, was brought up to the law, and settled as an attorney at Tewkesbury, where he died several years ago. The eldest daughter married Mr. Humphreys, an attorney of the same place. She and her two sisters, who are single, are still living.

It was a happy circumstance, that, at the time of Dr. Doddridge's illness and decease, he had for his assistant in the academy, Mr. Samuel Clark, the son of his friend Dr. Clark. In this gentleman were united wisdom, knowledge, and an uncommon equanimity and steadiness of temper. Indeed, though very young, he was well qualified to have been chosen to succeed Dr. Doddridge in the office of principal tutor: but this his modesty would not have permitted; and, upon the whole, it was undoubtedly proper that a man of more advanced life should be appointed. The person elected by Mr. Coward's trustees, and who had been recommended by Dr. Doddridge in his will, was the Rev. Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Caleb Ashworth, of Daventry, to which place the academy was removed in the autumn of 1752. Dr. Ashworth discharged the duties of the trust with great fidelity and diligence, and with an ability that increased as he proceeded in his employment. Mr. Clark continued as his assistant for several years, and, in so doing, contributed, in no small degree, to the usefulness and success of the institution. Whilst he was at Daventry he preached and published a sermon on occasion of the

* Ibid. p. 301.

earthquake at Lisbon. He afterwards settled at the Old Meeting at Birmingham, where he was highly and justly respected and esteemed, not only by his own congregation, but by all who knew him. On Sunday the third of December 1769, he was unhappily killed in the prime of his days, by a fall from his horse, as he was setting out to preach in the neighbourhood. The funeral discourse for him was delivered and printed by his friend Dr. Ashworth, under the title of "The Regards a Christian Congregation owe to "their deceased Ministers, represented and urged."

Of the writings of Dr. Doddridge, which were published in his life-time, we have already taken notice. With regard to his grand work, the Family Expositor, three volumes were still to make their appearance. Happily he had finished the whole of the copy, in short-hand, a few slight notes towards the conclusion excepted, and the larger part had been transcribed for the press. This was the case with all the fourth volume, the preface to which had been written by our author. In 1754 that volume was published, containing St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and his first and second Epistles to the Corinthians. "As far as I know myself," says the Doctor, "I have no favourite hypothesis to serve, nor a "fondness for any unscriptural phrases; in which so many "have, on one side, and the other, made the very being of "orthodoxy to consist. I have been disposed to let scrip-"ture carry me along with it, wherever it naturally leads, "rather than resolve it should follow me. Instead of la-"bouring to establish any human system, which has always, "I fear, a leaven of imperfection attending it; I have en-"deavoured to keep controversy as much out of sight as "possible, and to represent what I verily believe to be the "Scripture doctrine, in as simple a manner as I could, and "divested of those particular expressions, which some, who "perhaps are not averse to the main doctrine itself, are "ready to rise up against." One rule of interpretation laid down by Dr. Doddridge was, when the text and context will bear two meanings, to prefer that which gives the noblest and

most extensive sense, and might make the passage in question most universally useful. Plausible, however, as this rule may appear, there is danger, unless it be exercised with peculiar judgment, of its being occasionally productive of error. In fact, the business of a commentator on Scripture is to find out a single original signification of the language used by the sacred writers, and not to indulge his imagination in giving a scope to words beyond what was at first specifically intended.

In the beginning of the year 1755, Mr. Orton published a Collection of Dr. Doddridge's Hymns. Few of the Doctor's works have been more generally acceptable, the sixth edition of them having appeared in 1788. Indeed, they are, upon the whole, well calculated to answer the purposes of Christian devotion; and, being all of them founded upon particular texts of Scripture, cannot fail of being useful to ministers who preach on the same texts. With respect to poetical merit, if they cannot be placed in a high rank, they have enough of it for the immediate view which they were intended to answer. As the author had not so good an ear as Dr. Watts, his numbers are not equally flowing and harmonious. It may be mentioned to his praise, that he has not indulged to the extravagancies which Dr. Watts has fallen into, especially in the first book of his hymns. I observe with pleasure, that Dr. Doddridge has not taken a single subject from the Canticles.

The two remaining volumes of the Family Expositor, being the fifth and sixth, were published by Mr. Orton in 1756. From the editor's advertisement it appears, that Dr. Doddridge had himself transcribed for the press the paraphrase, improvements, and notes, of the fourth and fifth volumes, and the paraphrase and improvements of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the two First Epistles of St. John. The notes on these three Epistles, together with the paraphrase, improvements, and notes, on the remaining Epistles and the "Revelation," were carefully transcribed either by Mr. Orton himself, or by some of the Doctor's pupils, and the

transcript was compared several times with the short-hand copy. An accident, which, during the author's life, happened to part of the original manuscript, deserves to be recorded. In June 1750, a fire broke out in his study, occacasioned by a wax candle being left on his writing desk, and consumed many of his papers, and, in particular, part of one volume of the short-hand copy of the Family Expositor. The light of the fire, being, however, providentially discovered by an opposite neighbour, who gave an immediate alarm, it was speedily extinguished When the Doctor was informed of the accident, he seemed most anxious about the preservation of this manuscript; and when the flames were quenched, it appeared, to his great joy and surprise, that only that part of the volume which had been transcribed was destroyed; that the transcript lay in another place out of danger; and that all the untranscribed pages were perfectly legible, the edges of them only being singed. "Being an "eye witness," says Mr. Orton, "of the danger and deli- "verance, I record this account of it,—chiefly as it seems "to denote a particular care of Providence in preserving "this work, and a favourable omen, that God intends it for "extensive and lasting usefulness." Those who may not carry their reflections so far as Mr. Orton has done, will sympathize with Dr. Doddridge in the pleasure which he received in having his manuscript preserved.

Of all our author's writings, the Family Expositor is the most important and valuable. It is the work in which he took the greatest pains, and on which his literary reputation principally depends. Many of his notes display a sagacious and judicious spirit of criticism, and the practical reflections are of general utility. How well the work has been received by the learned and pious world, is apparent from the continued demand for it down to the present time; nor is its popularity likely to decrease. It is the tenth edition which is now called for by the public; not to mention the separate impressions of it that have appeared in Scotland and Ireland. In passing a just encomium on the Family Expositor, it will not be understood that there is any design of asserting that

it is a performance which is totally exempt from imperfections and errors. Such is not the character of the best human productions. Diversities of sentiment will occur with regard to Dr. Doddridge's interpretations of particular passages, and his criticisms upon them. Perhaps likewise, in some instances, his paraphrases may be deemed rather too redundant. But no observations of this kind are inconsistent with allowing to the work the praise of its contributing, in a high degree, to Christian instruction and improvement. The proper inference to be drawn from any mistakes into which the most successful elucidations of the Scriptures have fallen, is not to depreciate their general merit, but to avoid placing an undue confidence on their authority. While we thankfully derive from them the assistance they are capable of affording us in our inquiries into the meaning of the sacred oracles, we should freely examine, and impartially judge for ourselves.

Dr. Doddridge thought it would contribute to the usefulness of his Exposition, to digest the history of the four Evangelists into one continued series, or, in other words, to throw it into the order of an Harmony. If such an harmony could be effectually and decisively ascertained, each story and discourse would be exhibited with all its concurrent circumstances, as recorded by the sacred penman; frequent repetitions would be prevented; and a multitude of seeming oppositions be so evidently reconciled, as to supersede many objections. These undoubtedly are desirable objects, and the attainment of them is worthy of being sought for. We are indebted to the exertions of those gentlemen who have laboured in this field of theological literature. Where they have not sufficiently succeeded in the main point, they have, by their researches, been enabled to throw a new and beautiful light on many passages of the evangelical historians. That there is no small difficulty in the general subject, is manifest from the various systems that have been formed upon it by the ablest scholars, and the most judicious critics.

One part of Dr. Doddridge's Family Expositor, which

must have cost him uncommon pains, was his having every where interwoven the text with the paraphrase, and carefully distinguished the former from the latter by the Italic character. By this method, it is impossible to read the paraphrase without the text; and every one may immediately see, not only the particular clause to which any explication answers, but also what are the words of the original, and what merely the sense of the commentator. Nor was our author content with barely inserting the old translation, but gave an entire new version of the whole Testament, the merit and usefulness of which will in many respects be acknowledged. This translation was extracted from the paraphrase, and published in 1765, in two volumes, 12mo. with some alterations and improvements by the editor, together with an introduction, and a number of very short notes.

The last work of Dr. Doddridge which was given to the public, was his "Course of Lectures on the principal Subjects of Pneumatology, Ethics, and Divinity; with References to the most considerable Authors on each Subject." Of the nature and value of these lectures, which appeared in 1763, in one volume, quarto, I have already spoken. As another edition may probably soon be demanded, it may not be amiss to suggest, that it would be extremely useful to enlarge the list of references, by introducing the names and productions of those writers who have treated upon the several matters in question since the Doctor's decease. To a person conversant in the history of controversies, this would be no very difficult task; and it might, in particular, easily be executed by any gentleman, who, as a tutor, has made use of the lectures as a text-book, and who consequently has been in the habit of referring to succeeding authors.

If Providence had continued Dr. Doddridge's life, he would undoubtedly have endeavoured to extend his usefulness by many other publications. He intended to print a sermon to children, and some sacramental meditations. A considerable progress had been made by him in a "Dissertation on the Jewish Proselytes," the design of which was to defend that opinion concerning them, which he mentions

in some of his notes upon the Acts of the Apostles. Another work, which he had nearly completed, and in which he displayed his critical knowledge of the Hebrew language, was a new translation of the Minor Prophets. Neither the Dissertation on the Jewish Proselytes, nor the Translation of the Minor Prophets, were thought to be left in a sufficient state of perfection to be given to the world.* The loss with regard to the last of these objects is the less to be regretted, as the business hath since been executed with so much judgment and learning by the excellent Bishop Newcome.

Upon Dr. Doddridge's works in general, it would be easy to produce a variety of encomiums. The applauses he received were numerous; and what added to their value was, that they came from men by whom it was an honour to be applauded. Nor was it by the learned among the Dissenters only, that his abilities and writings were held in high estimation, but by many illustrious ornaments of the church of England. This is abundantly apparent from the collection of letters lately published. There will be found, together with the praises of a Barker, a Miles, a Neal, a Leland, and a Lardner, those of a Costard, a Warburton, an Oliver, a Newton, a Secker, an Ayscough, a Grey, a Hunt, a Gilbert West, a Maddox, a Sherlock, a Hildesley, a Duchess of Somerset, and a Lord Lyttelton. "I have read," says Bishop Secker, "your works with great satisfaction, and, I hope, "some benefit; and both rejoice and wonder that, in the "midst of your other occupations, you continue able, as I "pray God you long may, to oblige your fellow Christians "so often and so highly from the press. Indeed it must and "ought to be owned in general, that the Dissenters have done "excellently of late years in the service of Christianity; "and I hope our common welfare will make us chiefly attentive to our common interest, and unite us in a closer "alliance." By the way, the Bishop, in the same letter, has gently and properly rebuked Dr. Doddridge for the extravagantly complimental strain of his epistles. "I return you "many thanks for your favourable opinion both of my ser-

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 107, 104

" mon and its author, though expressed in a manner " which you would have forborn, if you had known me bet- " ter. Plain men should be treated in a plain way; and no- " body should have things said to him which he doth not de- " serve; and ought not to hear if he did. Let us all endea- " vour to do what good we can; and give those who seem to " endeavour it faithfully, the comfort of knowing we think " they do; but never tempt one another to forget we are " unprofitable servants.*"

The reception which Dr. Doddridge's writings met with abroad deserves to be specifically noticed. It appears that the most considerable of them have been translated into foreign languages. His Sermons on Regeneration, Salvation by Grace, on the Power and Grace of Christ, and his Letter on Family Prayer, have been published in the Dutch tongue. The Memoirs of Colonel Gardiner have appeared in the Dutch, French, and German languages; and the Rise and Progress of Religion in the same languages, to which may be added the Danish. It is observable, that the translation of the last work into French was undertaken by the particular encouragement of the late Prince and Princess of Orange, and a number of the gentry in Holland. A Protestant Prince of the empire promised to recommend it to those about him; and it was subscribed for by many persons of quality and rich citizens in Germany and Switzerland. Some learned men undertook to translate the former volumes of the Family Expositor into German; but the publication of it was opposed by several of the Lutheran clergy, from an apprehension that Dr. Doddridge's interpretation of particular passages, and his reflections upon them, might not agree with their established principles, or form of church-government. To remove their terrors, the persons concerned in the translation first published the Sermons on Regeneration in that language; the candour and moderation of which had such an effect in quieting the opposition, that the other work was completed.†

* Letters, ubi supra, p. 278.

† Orton, ubi supra, p. 123, 124

Such was the estimation in which Dr. Doddridge's writings have been held, and continue to be held, both at home and abroad. It does not, however, hence follow, that his most sincere admirers will think themselves obliged to concur with him in every sentiment and every expression. Many judicious persons have wished that his devotional treatises had been more accommodated to universal use, by a less Calvinistical turn of opinion and language. "I reckon it one unhappiness," says Mr. Jones, of Welwyn, "of this excellent man (my much respected friend) that having early imbibed the notions of some particular systems, he could not dislodge them out of his mind in his age of riper judgment. This hath been observed by others." Mr. Jones adds, that the Doctor's parts were uncommon, his learning great, his moderation equally so, and his life and conduct truly Christian.* Upon the whole, whatever diversity of judgment may be formed on different points, the grand end which Dr. Doddridge had in view, and the generally useful tendency of his works, cannot be denied. In every thing which he wrote, his aim was to promote the great purposes of practical religion.

The narrative which has now been given of Dr. Doddridge's life, has displayed the principal circumstances that illustrate his temper and conduct. Nevertheless, I cannot dismiss the subject without entering into a general view of his character. This I am induced to do, partly as it will afford me an opportunity of mentioning some things not hitherto noticed, and partly because I have the felicity, in the present case, of writing from an intimate personal knowledge; which is a satisfaction that has not frequently occurred in the numerous lives I have had occasion to lay before the public. The view which I shall take of our author will be of his intellectual, and of his religious and moral qualities.

I do not know that genius can be ascribed to Dr. Doddridge, taking that word in its highest signification, as employing either a great inventive faculty in science, or that

* Gentleman's Magazine, Vol. LIII. p. 103.

boldness of imagination which is productive of original imagery and combinations. In a lower and more popular sense of the term, he might be said to have been a man of genius; for he had a quick conception and a lively fancy. He had a comprehension of mind that enabled him to proceed with celerity and vigour in the acquisition of knowledge; and that activity of his mental frame, which put it into his power to learn much in a little time, was happily accompanied with an invincible resolution and perseverance in the prosecution of his studies. In consequence of his uncommon application, he might even with moderate abilities have laid up a large stock of various learning; and therefore it is not surprising that this should be the case with him, when it is considered that he was endued with a quickness of apprehension, and a remarkable strength of memory. So extensive was his acquaintance with books, that there were few on the general subjects of literature which he had not perused with attention; and he could retain and easily recollect what in them was most worthy to be remembered. Of ancient knowledge he had a considerable store. With regard to the learned languages, if he could not be called a profound linguist, he was sufficiently versed in them to read the most valuable pieces of antiquity with taste and pleasure. This is apparent from his paraphrase and notes on the New Testament, in which he has frequently illustrated the force and beauty of the originals with great judgment, and in the true spirit of criticism.*

Dr. Doddridge was well acquainted with the Greek philosophers and orators, among the last of whom he was particularly devoted to Demosthenes. To the poets of Greece he was far from being a stranger; but he was not, I think, deeply conversant with its tragedians. I remember, while I resided with him, his having read Pindar with much admiration. With the Latin classics he was largely acquainted. As became a divine and a theological tutor, he diligently studied the ancient fathers, especially of the three first centuries. He paid particular regard to the apologists for Christianity,

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 105—107.

and was a great master of Origen and Eusebius. Beyond the fourth century his knowledge of this species of literature did not, I believe, widely extend, though it did not wholly stop there. With ecclesiastical history he had a large acquaintance, and civil history engaged no small degree of his attention. To this he applied not only to enrich his memory with facts, but to make such reflections upon them, as tended either to promote his insight into human nature, to exemplify the interpositions of Providence, or to explain and illustrate the sacred writings.

Though Dr. Doddridge's disposition rather led him to cultivate the more polite than the abstruser parts of science, he was far from being a stranger to mathematical and philosophical studies. The system of Algebra which he read to his pupils was of his own composition. But the favourite object of his application, and that in which his principal excellency lay, was divinity, taking that word in its largest sense. Whatever could tend to strengthen the proofs of natural or revealed religion, to assist our conceptions of the divine Nature, or enable us more perfectly to understand the doctrines and discoveries of scripture, he thought deserving of the most attentive regard. To the evidences of the Jewish and Christian revelation he had paid uncommon attention, and how complete a master he was of the subject is apparent from his lectures. Perhaps there were few men who had more carefully studied the different systems of theology, or who could point out their several defects with greater accuracy and judgment. While he was not one of those who affect to treat with contempt the labours of the wise and the learned who have gone before them, but was always ready to receive whatever light they could afford him, nevertheless, without a slavish regard to human schemes, he took the sacred oracles for his guide, and always referred to them for the proofs of his doctrinal sentiments which he maintained. Upon the whole, I entirely agree with Mr. Orton, that, though others might exceed him in their acquaintance with antiquity, or their skill in the languages, he was surpassed by few in the

extent of his learning, and in the variety of useful and important knowledge of which he was possessed.*

With these stores of information, it was a great advantage to Dr. Doddridge that he had an uncommon facility of speaking and of writing. He used to descant, in his lectures, on the subjects treated of, with surprising perspicuity and freedom; and the same perspicuity and freedom attended him when he took the pen in hand. This was owing to the orderly disposition in which things lay in his mind. As his own ideas on the points he had studied, were clear and distinct, so his method of arranging his thoughts was uncommonly just and natural. There are, perhaps, few discourses in our language which excel those which were usually delivered by our author, either in the accuracy of the divisions, or the adaptation of the sentiments to the subject discussed. According to the fashion that now prevails, he may possibly be thought to have sometimes laid down and recapitulated his scheme in too formal a manner. But if he rather exceeded in this respect, his error had the advantage of assisting the memory, and contributing to the instruction of his hearers and readers.

Though Dr. Doddridge's invincible perseverance in study has already been mentioned, I am desirous of enlarging a little farther upon it. Literary diligence is a matter which I have always earnestly wished to press on every young man of liberal education with whom I have had acquaintance. When accompanied with original genius, it is the parent of all that is great and valuable in science; and where there is not much of original genius, provided there be a tolerable capacity, it is endued with the power of producing valuable attainments, and of rendering eminent services to the learned world. Of this diligence Dr. Doddridge was a striking example. The smallest portions of time were precious to him; and he was eager to seize every moment, even while he was waiting for dinner, company, or his pupils assembling together, that he might make some advance in any work in which he was engaged. So solicitous was he for continual improvement, that

* Ibid. p. 107—110.

one of his students generally read to him when he was shaving and dressing. This was a benefit to the pupils, as he took occasion to instruct them, by remarking on their manner of reading, and pointing out the excellencies and defects, either in sentiment or language, of the book before them. When he was upon a journey, or on occasional visits to his friends, where he spent the night, he took his papers with him, and employed at least part of the morning in carrying on some one or other of his important designs. From the time that he began to write his Family Expositor, something was done every day in it towards preparing it for the press. To all this it may be added, that his employments as an author and a tutor, never obstructed his most abundant labours as a minister and a pastor.

But what places Dr. Doddridge's diligence in a still more conspicuous point of view, is the extent of his correspondence. This alone would have been almost sufficient to have employed the whole time of an ordinary person. Besides his correspondence with the parents and guardians of his pupils, he had a number of letters to write, in answer to questions of moment which were proposed to him by his brethren, and especially by those who had studied under him. These last naturally applied to him for advice and direction, under the various difficulties which occurred to them in their respective situations. Many were the congregations that had recourse to him for ministers, or upon other accounts. His judgment, likewise, was frequently desired by learned men, concerning critical questions, or works which they were preparing for the press; and his own publications gave occasion for inquiries of this nature. Several foreign gentlemen and divines, who had heard of his character and perused his writings, sought his epistolary acquaintance; and to correspond with them in Latin or French, was an object that demanded particular attention. It is, indeed, surprising to find how many hundred letters were received and answered by him in the space of a single year.*

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 143, 144.

A very honourable part of Dr. Doddridge's correspondence was that which he maintained with some of the brightest ornaments, both among the clergy and laity of the established church. This is apparent from the Collection of Letters lately published. We there see how much he was esteemed, and how highly he was thought of, by the first religious and literary characters of the age. In the collection referred to, the letters of Warburton make a distinguished figure, and shew that great man in a new and very amiable light. They display not only his learning, but the piety, benevolence, and goodness of his mind. The severity, or rather the arrogance, with which he treated his literary antagonists must undoubtedly have afforded too just cause for leaving an unfavourable impression of him in the estimation of the world. But in private life he appears in a far more agreeable point of view. The only time I had ever the honour of being in his company, which was an hour and a half in his own study, I found him remarkably condescending in his manner, and admirably instructive and entertaining in his conversation.

Dr. Doddridge's correspondence was, I think, in some instances carried to an extent that might have been spared; and it is now certain that his friend Mr. Neal was so far of the same opinion, as to give him a gentle rebuke upon the subject.* There were people, whose good intentions were superior to their wisdom, and who had very little valuable to communicate, that were proud of writing letters to him, and of receiving his answers; and such was the easiness of his disposition, that he was more profuse in his returns to their kind affections, than convenience or even a regard to his health would admit. Sometimes he lightened his burden, by making use of the pens of his pupils, to whom he dictated his letters, while he himself went on with the Family Expositor, or any other work in which he was employed. I was not unfrequently either his amanuensis on these occasions, or read to him while he answered his correspondents.

* Letters, ubi supra, p. 390. 391.

I am next to take a survey of Dr. Doddridge in his religious and moral character. And here the prime and leading feature of his soul was that of devotion. This was the pervading principle of his actions, whether private or public. What Dr. Johnson has observed with regard to Dr. Watts, that as piety predominated in his mind, it was diffused over his works; and that whatever he took in hand was, by his incessant solicitude for souls, converted to theology,* may with equal propriety be applied to Dr. Doddridge. The greatest pains were taken by him to keep up an habitual sense of the Supreme Being; to maintain and increase the ardour of religion in his heart; and to furnish himself, by devout exercises, for the important labours of his station. Nor was it to his secret retirements that his piety was limited: it was manifested in every part of the day, and appeared in his usual intercourse with men. In the little vacancies of time which occur in the busiest of mankind, he was frequently lifting up his soul to God. When he lectured on philosophy, history, anatomy, or other subjects not immediately theological, he would endeavour to graft some religious instructions upon them, that he might raise the minds of his pupils to devotion, as well as to knowledge; and in his visits to his people, the Christian friend and minister were united.†

Dr. Doddridge entertained a high idea of the efficacy of prayer.‡ It is a point upon which I would speak with great humility and deference; but I cannot avoid thinking that, in this respect, he carried his sentiments somewhat farther than reason and truth will warrant. Of the importance of prayer, as a natural and just tribute to the Deity, as an admirable method of cherishing the virtues of the religious life, and as connected with the Divine approbation and favour, no one, I trust, can be more truly sensible than myself. My views of the matter have lately been so fully displayed, that they cannot be liable to any misconstruction.§ But still I am obliged to observe, that Dr. Doddridge did not, in my apprehension,

* Johnson's Lives of the Poets. Vol. IV. p. 280.

† Orton, ubi supra, p. 260, 263. ‡ Ibid. p. 241.

§ Sermons on practical Subjects Sermon the Seventh.

sufficiently limit his notions of the efficacy of prayer. He appeared to ascribe it to such an immediate influence upon the Supreme mind, and to expect from it such interpositions as are scarcely consistent with the regular order of Providence, and the stated course of events in the world. If, however, he erred upon this head, he has erred with many wise and good men who have gone before him, and by whom he has been succeeded. Perhaps Dr. Price and Dr. Ogden may be added to the number.

The piety of Dr. Doddridge was accompanied with the warmest benevolence to his fellow-creatures. No one could more strongly feel that the love of God was to be united with love to man. Nor was this a principle that rested in kind wishes and pathetic feelings for the happiness of others, but was manifested in the most active exertions for their welfare. No scheme of doing good was ever proposed to him into which he did not enter with ardour. This was apparent from many circumstances that might copiously be enlarged upon, did it comport with my present purpose. His Sermon for the benefit of the County Hospital at Northampton had been spoken of before; and it may here be added, that he not only contributed generously to that hospital, but spent much time in ripening the design. He often reflected, with great satisfaction on the pains he had taken to establish this charity, and on the good effects which it had produced, both in relieving many objects of distress, and in promoting a social catholic spirit among persons of different parties and persuasions. It was at his own expence that he printed and distributed his "Friendly Letter to the Private Soldiers of a Regiment of Foot." During the rebellion of 1745, he was remarkably zealous in the cause of his king and his country, and contributed to the raising of a regiment under the command of the Earl of Halifax, by his own liberality, as well as by his influence over others. In the case of a poor Irishman, whom he thought to be unjustly condemned for murder, he exerted himself in a very extraordinary manner, though without success. But the generosity of his mind was the most display-

ed when any schemes for propagating religion, and for spreading the gospel among those who were strangers to it, were proposed. In every thing of this kind he was always ready to take the lead, and was ardent in endeavouring to inspire his friends with the same spirit.*

No one could be more amiable than Dr. Doddridge was in his private virtues and manners. It would be needless to enlarge on the tenderness of his affections as a husband, a father, and a relation: nor is it necessary to insist upon his conduct to his pupils. If he occasionally distinguished any one of them by his particular favour, this did not hinder his behaving to all of them with the kindness of a parent; and his regard to them was never abated, excepting from their own fault. In the character of a friend he shone with distinguished lustre. Of friendship he entertained a sublime idea, and his heart was admirably fitted for discharging all the offices, and relishing all the delights of this endearing connection. It was the happy lot of his life to be honoured with many valuable and faithful friends; and how sensible he was of his felicity in this respect was displayed in every return of gratitude, esteem, and affection.† His deportment in company was strikingly polite, affable, and agreeable; and in conversation he greatly excelled; his discourse being at once instructive and entertaining, and not unfrequently rising to the splendid.

The candour of Dr. Doddridge's mind relative to his sentiments of other persons merit, was carried to the highest pitch, and indeed was sometimes so excessive as to lead him to form a far better opinion of several of his acquaintance than in fact they deserved. This fault was gently and pleasantly touched upon by Mr. Barker, in one of his letters. "But are you aware," says he, "what a creature you are? "I love you beyond expression, and admire your abilities, "furniture, spirits, &c. more than you imagine; and not a "man in the world rejoices more in your usefulness than I "do; and yet I often make myself merry with your cha- "racter and conduct. You are so entirely devoted to God,

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 178—181. † Ibid. p. 132.

"the truth, and holiness, that it is very easy to impose upon "you under the appearance of any of these, and you are "so perfectly made up of civility, candour, and good na- "ture, that a pious enthusiast, or godly dunce, is welcome "to your table, arms, and heart. You are so good yourself "that you think every body ten times better than they are; "see merit in the darkness of midnight; cannot see faults "without a noon-day sun; forgive injuries before they are "confessed; and confer favours as a reward for affronts."* With such a disposition of mind, it is not surprising that Dr. Doddridge should frequently be enabled to resist the arts of deception: and yet this did not proceed from a general ignorance of the world. He was well acquainted with men and with manners, and could often enter into, and discriminate with no small degree of penetration, the characters of mankind. But, at the same time, so ardent were the feelings of his piety, and such was the suavity of his temper, that he could not easily persuade himself that any persons were sincere, who made a profession of religion and goodness. There is a considerable difference between a speculative and a practical knowledge of the world. A man may possess much of the former, and yet, from a certain flexibility and tenderness of mind, have little of the latter. In particular instances he may have sagacity enough to suspect deceit, while he refuses to indulge the suspicion, lest it should lead him to err in his judgment, and be a motive for obstructing the exertions of his benevolence. Such was the case with Dr. Doddridge, and such, also, was the case with George Lord Lyttleton. They would both of them rather have chosen to be mistaken, than to have lost an opportunity of contributing to the relief of real distress.

In his sentiments of those who differed from him in religious opinions, Dr. Doddridge exercised great moderation. He never confined truth or goodness to one particular sect; and he behaved with the utmost candour to the members of the church of England. Of the established religion of his country he always spoke with respect; and he

* Letters, ubi supra, p. 139.

never made any petulant objections to its worship or discipline, or uttered against it any severe or unkind reflections. His correspondence with various clergymen of the highest rank and merit has heretofore been noticed. It was deeply lamented by him, that a separation from the establishment was, in his apprehension, and that of many other good men, rendered so necessary; and he sincerely wished and prayed for a greater union among Protestants. A like candid and friendly spirit he endeavoured to promote among his pupils; and he did it with success; for few of them, I believe, can be mentioned who have not, in this respect, followed the instructions, and imitated the example of their tutor.* With all Dr. Doddridge's moderation of temper, he did not in every case meet with a suitable return. Some time after he had set up his academy at Northampton, a prosecution was commenced against him in the ecclesiastical court, by the instigation of several dignitaries of the church. The step, however, was totally disapproved of by many other eminent members of the establishment. Nevertheless, the persons who had engaged in the business seemed determined to carry it on with vigour; and, as the laws then stood, they must have succeeded in their design, had not an application been made to King George the Second, who received, from some gentlemen of rank and influence, such a just representation of the Doctor's loyal, peaceable, and moderate principles and character, as induced his Majesty to give an express order for putting a stop to the prosecution.†

That candour of mind which Dr. Doddridge exercised towards the members of the established church, was cultivated by him with regard to his dissenting brethren, of different denominations. He was solicitous to be upon friendly terms, as far as possible, with all of them; and by the generality of them he was held in high estimation. If this was not the case without exception, it will not appear surprising to those who reflect upon the diversities of sentiment that are found among the Dissenters There were a few among them who even went so far as to charge him with insincerity. The ac-

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 158—160, 161, 164. † Ibid. p. 203.

cusation they brought against him was, that he used some particular phrases in his writings, in a sense different from that in which he himself understood them, in order to please a party. A friend having acquainted him with this charge, he answered as follows: "My conscience doth not tell me "that I am at all to blame on the head you mention. I "write for the public (as I would also do in every private "correspondence) as in the presence of God, and in the "views of his judgment. I would not purchase that phan-"tom, popularity, which is often owing to the very worst "part of a man's character or performances, by any com-"plainces beneath the dignity of a Christian minister; an "office, of which I think so highly, as to be deeply sen-"sible how unworthy I am to bear it. On the other hand, "I do indeed desire to give as little offence as I honestly "can; and I have high authorities for it: and though I "am, and always declare that I am, in my judgment, "greatly against the imposition of human phrases, yet, "as some can hardly be avoided on the one hand or "the other, I choose to adopt and use some that are am-"biguous, in what I take to be a fair sense, though not the "only sense they might bear; and by declaring it, to en-"deavour to fix a good idea to them, rather than absolute-"ly to declare against, or even totally to disuse them. "Others, wider by far in their sentiments than I, are in-"dulged in this, and even applauded for it: I have the mis-"fortune (I cannot use the word more properly) to be con-"demned."* Whilst I have a full conviction of Dr. Doddridge's sincerity in this matter, I cannot agree with him in opinion. Offensive expressions may justly be avoided; but surely, ambiguous ones should never designedly be adopted. The language we use in delivering our views of things, ought to be natural, clear, and capable only of one signification.

The charge I have mentioned against Dr. Doddridge with regard to his writings, has been extended to his preaching. By some of his enemies it was asserted, that he was a trimmer in the pulpit. The fact, I am satisfied, was precisely

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 221.

as follows. When he preached in different places, he so far accommodated himself to the dispositions of the people before whom he discoursed, as to avoid giving offence. If a congregation consisted of persons who were of free sentiments in religion, his sermon was entirely of a practical nature. On the other hand, in preaching before a Calvinistical society, it was customary with him to choose what was called an evangelical subject. In neither cases did he deliver any thing that was contrary to his sincere opinion. His accusers did not sufficiently recollect, that he was far more devoted to what were deemed the orthodox doctrines than they were ready to imagine; and he had an undoubted right to be believed, when he declared, as he has done in the letter before recited, "On the whole, I know assuredly, "that I have not on any occasion belied the real sentiments "of my heart."* The persons who were most disposed to find fault with Dr. Doddridge, with respect to the point in question, were those who were entitled the Rational Dissenters. They could not easily persuade themselves that a man of such abilities, and general liberality of mind, could entertain very different opinions from their own; and they wished to have him rank more *explicitly* among them. It cannot be denied, that in one or two instances, they had some reason to complain of his timidity: but, at the same time, there were many occasions on which he behaved with a very becoming fortitude. Once, I remember, some narrow-minded people of his congregation gave him no small trouble on account of a gentleman, in communion with the church, who was a professed Arian, and who otherwise departed from the common standard of orthodoxy. This gentleman they wished either to be excluded from the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, or to have his attendance upon it prevented. But the Doctor declared, that he would sacrifice his place, and even his life, rather than fix any such mark of discouragement upon one, who, whatever his doctrinal sentiments were, appeared to be a real Christian. When our author happened to be in company with persons of rank

* Ibid. p. 222.

and fortune, he never suffered the least tendency to profaneness or licentiousness to pass unnoticed; but manifested his dislike to them, with the freedom of the divine, accompanied with the politeness of the gentleman. A correspondent having charged him with unsoundness in one of his publications, his only answer was, *Quod scripsi, scripsi;** "What I have written, I have written."

How sincerely Dr. Doddridge detested the want of integrity in character, was displayed in the following fact: One of his pupils was in the habit of making a jest of what is called orthodoxy, and of ridiculing those who adhered to it; and this he continued to do, up to the time in which he began to preach. Then, to the no small surprise of his intimate acquaintance, it was rumoured, that in the congregations where he had officiated in the neighbourhood of Northampton, he had appeared highly Calvinistical, and indeed much more so than almost any other of his fellow-students. For obvious reasons he declined ever preaching at Northampton. At length, the affair was brought before the Doctor; and both parts of the charge having been proved by decisive evidence, the young man was dismissed. Being a person of some fortune, he was not involved by his disgrace in any pecuniary difficulties.

With that impartiality which is the duty of every biographer, I have mentioned, in the course of my narrative, the instances wherein it appeared to me that the character of Dr. Doddridge was shaded with some degree of imperfection. The same impartiality obliges me to add, that, at times, he had too ostentatious a manner of speaking concerning the multiplicity of his employments, engagements, and correspondences; and that he was fonder of applause, from every quarter, than was desirable in one who was so justly entitled to it, where applause was an honour. I have often thought, that in certain points, he had a resemblance of Cicero. He resembled him in the love of fame, and in not possessing what may be called the sternness of fortitude. He resembled him likewise in more estimable qualities; in the copiousness, diffusion, and pathos of his eloquence; and in the

* Letters to a young Clergyman, p. 103.

sensibilities and tenderness of his mind, especially as displayed in the loss of a daughter.

When all Dr. Doddridge's imperfections are collected together, they will be found to have been very trifling in comparison with his excellencies. One or two more of his virtues I shall touch upon before I conclude. Few have exceeded him in the exercise of humility, both with relation to God and man. With respect to God, it was apparent in the deepest expressions of concern for the defects of his improvements and his services; and with regard to man, it was manifested in his condescension to the meanest persons, in his behaviour to his pupils, and the patience with which he submitted to the words of reproof. He was even highly thankful to his friends for pointing out to him what they judged to be amiss in his conduct. The language of humility that was used by him, though undoubtedly sincere, was sometimes carried to an excess. In a letter to Dr. Wood, of Norwich, he thus expresses himself: "Pity me, and pray for "me, as you do, in the midst of so many hurries. Oh, my "poor, poor attempts of service! they shame me continu- "ally. My prayers, my sermons, my lectures, my books "(in hand,) my letters, all daily shame me."* Nothing can vindicate such humiliating terms from the charge of affectation but the remembrance that the letter was written under a peculiar depression of spirits, united with that strong sense which Dr. Doddridge always entertained of the ardour, zeal, and diligence, with which the duties of life ought to be performed.

Among the Doctor's other excellencies, I might insist upon the resignation, serenity, and cheerfulness with which he submitted to the distresses of the present state. One of his afflictions, and it was an affliction that called for the exercise of his meekness and patience, was the unkind treatment which he sometimes met with from those who owed to him a far different kind of behaviour. Few men less deserved to be evil spoken of; but to pass through the world without reproach is not the lot of the purest virtue. Some of his pu-

* Letters to and from Dr. Doddridge, p. 307.

pils were angry with him, and set themselves to misrepresent his character, because he would not recommend them to places they wished for, but for which he conscientiously judged them to be unqualified. His kind behaviour to them in other respects did not compensate, in their estimation, for the wound he had given to their self-opinion.* This is a difficulty which has been experienced by others, who, from their situations among the Dissenters, are supposed to have any influence in recommending to vacant congregations. Dr. Doddridge was even aspersed in the case of a guardianship, where he had acted with the utmost probity, friendship, and benevolence.† Whatever was the ill usage to which he was exposed, he sustained it with mildness, and was always ready to manifest a forgiving temper. Nothing could be farther from his character than a resentful disposition.

Upon the whole, Dr. Doddridge was not only a great man, but one of the most excellent and useful Christians, and Christian ministers, that ever existed. The impression of his numerous and amiable virtues will not be effaced from my mind so long as it retains any sense of feeling or reflection. So far will be the impression from being lost upon me, that I shall always cherish it with the utmost ardour; and I esteem it as no small felicity of my life, that I have been preserved to give this testimony of duty, gratitude, and affection, to the memory of my benefactor, my tutor, my friend, and my father.

* Orton, ubi supra, p. 229. † Ibid. p. 232.

TO HER ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCESS OF WALES.

MADAM,

I MOST thankfully acknowledge the condescension of your Royal Highness in allowing me the honour of laying this work at your feet, and committing it to so august a protection; and humbly beg your favourable acceptance of it, as a most sincere, though inconsiderable expression of the profoundest duty, and most cordial esteem.

Could I lay open to your Royal Highness all the secret sentiments of my heart, you would read there the most affectionate sense of that gracious Providence which conducted you hither, to instruct and adorn Great Britain by so amiable an example, as well as to bless it with a race of princes descended from the illustrious houses of Brunswick and Saxe-Gotha in so happy an union! Joyfully have I, long since, taken my part with thousands, in congratulating my country and your Royal Highness on this occasion, and acknowledging that wise and paternal care his Majesty hath therein expressed for the happiness of succeeding generations: but permit me, Madam, freely to add, that with regard to yourself, I rejoice not so much in this accession to your grandeur, as in the persuasion I have, that you are possessed of a mind

so superior to it, as to render it in all its remotest consequences, what greatness is not always to its possessors, safe, honourable, and advantageous. Universal report leaves me no room to doubt, that even in this blooming age you are tenderly sensible of the shining dangers inseparable from so high a rank; and that it appears to your princely wisdom chiefly desirable, on account of those distinguished advantages which it may give, of approving yourself the faithful servant of God, and the generous friend of the public.

Among the principal of these advantages, your Royal Highness will undoubtedly number the opportunity which this exalted station of life affords you of forming to early sentiments of religion and virtue the opening minds of your royal offspring; those dear pledges of the liberty and happiness of ages yet to come, on whose temper and character, so much of public glory to our nation, so much of private felicity to yet unformed families, will depend. We adore the great Disposer of all events, who hath lodged this important trust in so wise and so pious a hand; and it must argue a very irreligious, or a very careless temper, if any neglect earnestly to pray, that He who hath so graciously assigned it to you, may direct and prosper you in it. While you, Madam, during the tender years which most naturally fall under the care of a mother, are endeavouring to bless these lovely infants with an education like that which you received from the excellent princes your parents, may your Royal Highness, in a success like theirs, receive the joys you have given! May they arise and shine on the whole Protestant world, in

the lustre of every royal virtue and every Christian grace, which can render them dear to God and to their country, and, to say all in a word, worthy their relation to the Prince and Princess of Wales, and to all the glorious line of remoter ancestors from which they spring!

I should esteem it one of the greatest blessings of my life, and should be able to relish the thought in the nearest views of death itself, if this humble present which I here offer to your Royal Highness might give you any assistance in these pious cares. If the kings of *Israel* were required not only to *read the law of Moses all the days of their lives*, but to *write out a copy of it* with their own hand; it may reasonably be expected, that *Christian* princes should make the far more glorious *gospel of the Son of God* their daily study, that it may be their constant guide. And I persuade myself, Madam, that none of the fashionable amusements of the age will seem to you in any degree comparable to that rational and elevated pleasure, which you will find in pointing out to your happy charge, as they grow capable of such instructions, the resplendent example of Jesus, the Prince of heaven, and the King of glory; in tracing the marvellous and edifying circumstances of his life, as here described; and in urging their humble and dutiful regards to that Divine, yet condescending Redeemer; to whom your Royal Highness, with all those amiable virtues which render you the delight and boast of our nation, will thankfully ascribe your own hopes of being finally accepted by God, and sharing the joys of his eternal presence.

These hopes, Madam, are the grand supports of the human mind in those views, from which royalty and empire cannot shelter it. An awful Providence, which we must all long lament, did early write these admonitions to your Royal Highness in the dust of one of the best of queens. The attention with which her late Majesty studied the sacred oracles, and the evidences of our holy religion, for which, even in her departing moments, she expressed so firm a regard, will, I hope, never be forgotten by any allied to her, or descended from her. Nor am I able, in all the overflowings of the most affectionate gratitude and duty which I now feel, to form a more important wish for that condescending Patroness to whom I am addressing, than (to borrow the words of the Hebrew monarch,) that *the testimonies of God may be her delight and her counsellors!* And I trust, Madam, that they are so; I trust that, conscious of a heart devoted to God, and supported by a well-grounded confidence in his favour, you are fixing your eyes on a celestial diadem, which shall sparkle with immortal glories, when the kingdoms of this earth shall be known no more, and all its pageantry shall be passed away like a dream. May you at length, in a very distant moment, have a happy accession to that never-fading crown; and, after having long adorned the highest stations here with that amiable Prince, whose constant and endearing friendship is so much more to your Royal Highness than all the grandeur which can result from your relation to him, may you be both exalted to the superior glories of the heavenly kingdom!

I hope your Royal Highness will please to pardon me, that I have expressed myself with so much warmth and freedom, in a presence I so highly revere: but I should be most unworthy of the name and honour of a Christian minister, if I were ever ashamed of sentiments like these; and the assiduity with which I have lately been sitting at the feet of my Divine Master, while commenting on these authentic memoirs of his life and history, hath inspired me with a veneration and ardour which it is not easy to repress. I am sensible, Madam, these are unfashionable strains on such an occasion; and it would have been easy to have filled many more pages than these with panegyric, on what I have read of your illustrious ancestors, and what I have heard from multitudes, of the charms of your Royal Highness's person and character: but I imagined that such hints as these were more suitable to that plainness and simplicity which at all times become a servant of Christ; and I flatter myself, that, to a person of your Royal Highness's penetration, they will not seem less expressive of that undissembled esteem, and affectionate zeal, with which I am,

MADAM,

Your Royal Highness's

most faithful, most dutiful,

and most obedient, humble servant,

PHILIP DODDRIDGE.

PREFACE.

I HAVE long been convinced, that if any thing can stop that progress of infidelity and vice, which every wise man beholds with sorrow and fear; that if any thing can allay those animosities, which (unnatural as they are) have so long inflamed us, and pained the heart of every generous Christian; in a word, that if any thing can establish the purity and order, the peace and glory of the church, or spread the triumphs of personal and domestic religion among us, it must be an attentive study of the word of God, and especially of the *New Testament*: that best of books, which, if read with impartiality and seriousness, under the influences of that blessed Spirit by whom it was inspired, would have the noblest tendency to enlighten and adorn the mind, and not only to touch, but to animate and transform the heart.

The station of life in which Divine Providence has placed me, rendered it peculiarly necessary for me to make these *sacred oracles* my principal study; and having, to my unspeakable delight and advantage, felt much of their energy, I long since determined, that it should be the main business of my life as an author, to illustrate them, and to lead my fellow-christians into a due regard for them, by endeavouring, in as plain and popular a manner as I could, to display their beauty, their spirit, and their use; and I thankfully acknowledge the goodness of God to me, in giving me health and spirits to finish so considerable a part of my design, though I have so much other business on my hands, and have been obliged to execute this in a much more laborious manner than I at first apprehended would have been requisite.

The title I have given to the work sufficiently explains its original design, which was chiefly to promote *family religion*, and to render the reading of the *New Testament* more plea-

sant and improving to those that wanted the benefit of a learned education, and had not opportunity or inclination to consult a variety of commentators. And I thought it proper still to retain the title of *The Family Expositor*, even when I had made some alteration in the plan; because that is still the leading view of the greater part of the work. In pursuit of this I have given a large *paraphrase* on the sacred text, well knowing, that this is the most agreeable and useful manner of explaining it to common readers, who hardly know how to manage annotations, especially when they are to be read to others. The chief objection against this way is, that when a whole verse, and much more when several verses are taken together (as they frequently are,) it requires a great attention, and in some places some considerable penetration, to trace the exact correspondence between the respective clauses of the *text* and the *paraphrase*. There are some performances of this kind in our own language, as well as in others, in which such liberties are taken, that I freely confess that, were it not for the initial references, or opposite column, I should not be able to guess from the *paraphrase* itself, what the *scripture* was which it pretended to explain. This must undoubtedly give the greatest advantage for disguise and misrepresentation; and where those glosses are read by themselves without the *scriptures*, (which I know has been the case in some families,) it is really exchanging the *prophets* and *apostles* for *modern divines*. To prevent this intolerable evil, I have formed my *paraphrase* so, that it is impossible to read it without the text, having every where interwoven the *words of scripture* with it, and carefully distinguished them from the rest by the *Italic character*; so that every one may immediately see, not only the particular clause to which any explication answers, but also what are the words of the sacred original, and what merely the sense of a fallible man, who is liable, though in the integrity of his heart, to mislead his readers, and dares not attribute to himself the singular glory of having put off every prejudice, even while he would deliberately and knowingly allow none.

I thought it might be some additional improvement of this

work, and some entertainment to the more accurate reader, to give the text in a *new version;* which I have accordingly done from the *original* with all the care I could. There are so few places in which the general sense will appear different from our received translation, that some will perhaps think this an unnecessary trouble: but I can by no means repent it, as it has given me an opportunity of searching more accurately into several beauties of expression which had before escaped me, and of making some alterations, which, though they may not be very material to the edification of men's souls, may yet in some degree do a further honour to scripture; raising some of those ornaments which were before depressed; and sufficiently proving that several objections urged against it were entirely of an English growth: ends, which might yet more abundantly be answered by a new version of the Old Testament, which has suffered much more in our translation, as it is natural to suppose it must.

I thought it might also conduce to the usefulness of this exposition to digest the history of the four evangelists into one continued series, or, in other words, to throw it into the *order of an harmony.* By this means each story and discourse is exhibited with all its concurrent circumstances, as recorded by the sacred penmen; frequent repetitions are prevented; and a multitude of seeming oppositions are so evidently reconciled, as to supersede many objections, and render the very mention of them unnecessary. My reader will hardly imagine the pains that this part of the work has cost me; both in examining the *order* of the several *texts*, and collating the different accounts in each, in such a manner, that no one clause in any of the *evangelists* might be omitted, and yet the several passages to be inserted might make one connected sense, and, without any large addition, stand in a due grammatical order. I was the more sensible of this labour, as I laid it down for a maxim to myself, when I entered on this work, that I would study as much as possible to make it an original in all its parts. Accordingly, the first copy of it was drawn up with hardly any other assistance than that of the *Greek Testament*, which I endeavoured to *har-*

monize, to *translate*, to *paraphrase*, and to *improve*, just as if none had ever attempted any thing of that nature before me. Afterwards I was obliged to compare it with what others had done; and, as may easily be supposed, I found in many instances an agreement, and in many others a difference betwixt them and myself. Where we differed, I endeavoured impartially to examine the reasons on both sides; and where I have perceived myself indebted to any, for leading me into a more just and beautiful *version*, *explication*, or *disposition*, than I had before chosen, I have generally, and, so far as I can recollect, universally, acknowledged it; unless where the hint came from some living friend, where such acknowledgment would not have been agreeable. There are, no doubt, many other instances in which the thoughts that seemed originally my own, might be suggested by memory, though I knew not from whence they came; and a thousand more are so obvious, that one would suppose they must occur to every attentive reader, who has any genius and furniture for criticism. To have multiplied references and quotations in such a case, would have been, I think, a very useless and burdensome piece of pedantry, and might, (as I fear has been the case with Pfeiffer and Wolfius) have discouraged the reader from consulting any, in so great a crowd. I could not well brook the drudgery of transcribing the works of others, and should scorn the meanness of dressing myself up in borrowed plumes; but if any imagine me a *mere compiler*, I shall not be greatly concerned at their mistake, but say, with the modest and excellent Mons. Rollin, "*If the* "*things themselves are good, it signifies very little whose* "*they are.*"*

The *notes* are, at the desire of many friends, entirely added to my first scheme; and when I saw so many persons of learning and rank were pleased to encourage my undertaking, I thought it would be no unacceptable expression of my gratitude to them to insert several which I should otherwise have omitted. Some of them seemed absolutely necessary

* Que m'importe d'ou il soit, pourvu qu'il se trouve utile.—*Roll. Man. d'enseign*, Vol. I. p. 75.

to justify the *version* and *paraphrase*, in what might seem most peculiar in it: several more refer to the *order*, and give my reasons for leaving the general track, where I have left it, and for not leaving it much oftener, where some very learned and ingenious authors have taken a great deal of pains (though, I persuade myself, with a very good intent,) to lead us out of the way: and as several of these are *modern writers*, the *remarks* are such as do not commonly occur. The rest of the notes consist, either of some observations on the beauty and force of various passages, which I do not remember to have seen elsewhere; or of references to, and observations upon, considerable writers, whether they be or be not professed *expositors of scripture*, who seem in the most masterly manner to examine or to illustrate and confirm the sense I have given. These are generally but very short; because it would have been quite foreign to my purpose, and utterly inconsistent with my scheme, to have formed them into large critical essays: but I hope they may be some guide to young students, who, if they have libraries at hand, are in great danger of being *lost in a wood*, where I am sorry to say it, they will find a multitude of *prickly and knotty shrubs*, and in comparison but few *pleasant and fruitful trees*. It has appeared to me an office of real and important friendship to gentlemen in this station of life to endeavour to select for them the most valuable passages which occur in reading, and to remit them thither, not only for the *illustration* of *scripture*, but also for their direction in studying the *evidences* and *contents* both of *natural* and *revealed religion*. This I have done with great care and labour in a pretty large work, which perhaps may be published after my death, if surviving friends should judge it proper. To that I have generally referred those citations which relate to *polemical divinity*; and at present only add that, with regard to these notes, I have endeavoured to render them easy and entertaining, even to an English reader; and for that purpose have cautiously excluded quotations from the learned languages, even where they might have served to illustrate customs referred to, or words to be explained. That deficiency may be abundantly made up by the perusal of *Elsner*, *Albert*,

Bos, Wolfius, Raphelius, Fortuita Sacra, &c.* books which I cannot but recommend to my young friends, as proper not only to ascertain the sense of a variety of words and phrases which occur in the apostolic writings, but also to form them to the most useful method of studying the Greek classics; those great masters of solid sense, elegant expression, just lively painting, and masculine eloquence, to the neglect of which I cannot but ascribe that enervate, dissolute, and puerile manner of writing, which is growing so much on the present age, and will probably consign so many of its productions to speedy oblivion.

The improvement of each section is entirely of a practical nature, and generally consists of pressing exhortations, and devout meditations, grounded on the general design, or on some particular passages, of the section to which they are annexed. They are all in an evangelical strain, and they could not with any propriety have been otherwise. I am well aware that this manner is not much in the present taste, and I think it at once a sad instance and cause of our degeneracy that it is not. If it be necessary that I should offer any apology, it must in short be this: I have with all possible attention and impartiality considered first the general evidences of the truth of Christianity, and then those of the inspiration of the New Testament, which seems to me inseparably connected with the former; and, on the whole, am in my conscience persuaded of both, and have been confirmed in that conviction by the most laboured attempts to overthrow them. It seems a necessary consequence of this conviction (and I am astonished it should not be more generally

* As some of the books mentioned above are not very common among us, it may not be improper to insert their titles, viz.

Jacobi Elsner, Observat. Sacræ, 2 vol. 8vo *Traject. ad Rhen.* 1720.
Alberti Observ. Philolog. Lugd. Bat. 1725.
Lamberti Bos Exercitat. Philolog. Franck. 1700.
——— *Animadvers. Franck.* 1715.
——— *Observat. Miscell. Leovard.* 1731.
Raphelii Annotat. Philol. in Nov. Test. ex Xenophonte, Polybio, & Herodoto collectæ, 3 tom. *Lunen,* 1731.
Wolfii Curæ Philolog. & Criticæ, 4to. *Hamb.* 1725.

attended to,) that we are with the humblest submission of mind to form our religious notions on this plan, and to give up the most darling maxims which will not bear the test of it.

I should think an impartial reader must immediately see, and every judicious critic be daily more confirmed in it, that the *New Testament* teaches us to conceive of *Christ*, not as a generous *benefactor* only, who, having performed some actions of heroic virtue and benevolence, is now retired from all intercourse with our world, so that we have no more to do with him than to preserve a grateful remembrance of his character and favours; but that he is to be considered as an ever-living and ever-present *friend*, with whom we are to maintain a daily commerce by faith and prayer, and from whom we are to derive those supplies of divine grace, whereby we may be strengthened for the duties of life, and ripened for a state of perfect holiness and felicity. This is evident not only from particular passages of *scripture*, in which he is described as *always with* his church, (Mat. xxviii. 20.) as present *where-ever two or three are assembled in his name*, (Mat. xviii. 20.) as *upholding all things by the word of his power*, (Heb. i. 3.) and as *Head over all to his church*, (Eph. i. 22.) but indeed from the whole scope and tenor of the *New Testament*. These views are therefore continually to be kept up; and for any to pretend that this is a *round-about method* (as some have presumed to call it,) and that men may be led to virtue, the great end of all, by a much plainer and more direct way, seems to me only a vain and arrogant attempt *to be wiser than God himself*; which therefore must in the end appear to be *folly*, with whatever subtlety of argument it may be defended, or with whatever pomp of rhetoric it be adorned.

The *New Testament* is a book written with the most consummate knowledge of human nature; and though there are a thousand latent beauties in it, which it is the business and glory of true criticism to place in a true point of light, the general sense and design of it is plain to every honest reader, even at the very first perusal. It is evidently intended to

bring us to God through Christ, in an humble dependence on the communications of his sanctifying and quickening Spirit; and to engage us to a course of faithful and universal obedience, chiefly from a grateful sense of the riches of divine grace manifested to us in the gospel. And though this scheme is indeed liable to abuse, as every thing else is, it appears to me plain in fact, that it has been, and still is the grand instrument of reforming a very degenerate world; and, according to the best observations I have been able to make on what has passed about me, or within my own breast, I have found, that, in proportion to the degree in which this evangelical scheme is received and relished, the interest of true virtue and holiness flourishes, and the mind is formed to manly devotion, diffusive benevolence, steady fortitude, and, in short, made *ready to every good word and work.* To this therefore I am determined, at all adventures, to adhere; nor am I at all ashamed or afraid of any scorn which I may encounter in such a cause; and I would earnestly exhort, and entreat, all my brethren in the Christian ministry to join with me, as well knowing *to whom* we have *committed our souls;* and cheerfully hoping, that He, by whom we have hitherto, if faithful in our calling, been supported and animated, will at length *confess* us *before the presence of his Father and the holy angels* in *that day,* when it will be found no dishonour to the greatest and wisest of the children of men to have listed themselves under the *banner* of the *cross,* and constantly and affectionately to have kept their divine Leader in view.

I cannot flatter myself so far, as to imagine that I have fallen into no mistakes, in a work of so great compass and difficulty; but my own conscience acquits me of having designedly misrepresented any *single passage* of *scripture,* or of having written *one line* with a purpose of enflaming the hearts of *Christians* against each other. I should esteem it one of the most aggravated crimes to make the life of the gentle and benevolent *Jesus* a vehicle to convey such a poison. Would to God that all the *party-names,* and *unscriptural phrases* and *forms,* which have divided the *Christian world,* were forgot! and that we might agree to sit down together

as humble loving *disciples*, at the feet of *our common Master*, to hear *his word*, to imbibe *his Spirit*, and to transcribe *his life* in our own!

I hope it is some token of such growing candour on one side, as I am sure it should be an engagement to cultivate it on the other, that so many of the reverend clergy of the establishment, as well as other persons of distinction in it, have favoured this undertaking with their encouragement. To them, and all my other friends, I return my most hearty thanks; and shall remember, that the regard they have been pleased to express to it, obliges me to pursue the remainder of the work with the utmost care and application; and earnestly entreat the farther assistance of their prayers, that it may be conducted in a manner subservient to the honour of the gospel and the edification of the church.

In these volumes I have been desirous to express my gratitude to the subscribers, by sparing nothing in my power which might render the work acceptable to them, both with respect to its contents and its form. The consequence of this is, that it hath swelled to a number of sheets, which by more than a third part exceeds what I promised in the proposals; which, though at a great expence, I chose to permit, rather than I would either sink the paper and character beneath the specimen, or omit some remarks in the notes which appeared to me of moment, and rose in my mind while I was transcribing them. But I hope this large addition to what was at first expected, will excuse my not complying with the importunity of some of my friends, who have requested that I would introduce this work with a *dissertation* on such points of *Jewish antiquity* as might be serviceable for the fuller understanding the *New Testament*, or with a *discourse* on its *genuineness*, *credibility*, *inspiration*, and *use*.

As to the first of these, (a compendious view of such articles of Jewish antiquity as may be a proper introduction to the critical study of scripture,) I do with great pleasure refer the generality of readers and young students, to the general preface to the Prussian Testament, published by Mess. L'Enfant and Beausobre; which preface was some years since

translated into English, and suits the purpose better than any thing I have seen within so small a compass. As to the latter, I purpose, if God permit, when I have finished the second volume, to publish with another edition of my Three Sermons on the Evidences of Christianity, two or three discourses more on the *inspiration* of the *New Testament*, and on its *usefulness*, especially that of the *Evangelical History*; to which I may perhaps add some farther directions for the most profitable manner of reading it. At present I shall only add, that daily experience convinces me more and more, that as a thousand charms discover themselves in the works of nature, when attentively viewed with glasses, which had escaped the naked eye; so our admiration of the holy scriptures will rise in proportion to the accuracy with which they are studied.

As for these histories and discourses of *Christ*, I may say of them, with far greater justice, what Simplicius doth of Epictetus, in the passage of which my *motto* is a part, and with which I shall conclude my preface: "The words themselves are "generally plain and intelligible: but I have endeavoured "thus to unfold them, that my own heart might be more "deeply impressed with the spirit and certainty of them; "and that others, who have not themselves equal advantage "for entering into it, might be guided into their true interpretation. But if, on the whole, any reader continue entirely unaffected with them, there is little prospect that "any thing will reclaim him till he come to the *tribunal of* "*the invisible world**."

* Και εισι μεν οι λογοι σαφεις· ε χειρον δε ισως, καλα το δυνατον διαπλυσσειν αυλους. Ο τε γαρ γραφων, συμπαθες ερος τε αμα ωρος αυλης γενησεται, και της αληθειας αυλων καλανοητικωτερος· και των φιλομαθων οι ωρος λογους ασυνηθες εροι, ισως εξουσι τινα χειραγωγιαν εκ της ερμηνειας αυτων.—Ει δε τις υπο τουτων μη ωασχη των λογων, υπο μονων αν των εν αδε δικαστηριων υπευθυνθειη.

Simplic. in Epictet. *Procm.*

NORTHAMPTON,
Nov. 27, 1738.

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LXVIII.	xiii. 31—35 44—53	iv. 26—34.	——	——
LXIX.	viii. 18—27.	iv. 35, *ad fin.*	viii. 22—25. ix. 57, *ad fin.*	——
LXX.	viii. 28 *ad fin.* ix. 1.	v. 1—21.	viii. 26—40.	——
LXXI.	ix. 10—17.	ii. 15—22.	v. 28, *ad fin.*	——
LXXII.	ix. 18—34.	v. 22, *ad fin.*	viii. 41, *ad fin.*	——
LXXIII.	xiii. 54 *ad fin.* ix. 35, *ad fin.*	vi. 1—6.	——	——
LXXIV.	x. 1—15.	vi. 7—11.	ix. 1—5.	——
LXXV.	x. 16—28.	——	——	——
LXXVI.	x. 29, *ad fin.* xi. 1.	vi. 12, 13.	ix. 6.	——
LXXVII.	xiv. 1, 2. 6—12.	vi. 14—29.	ix. 7—9.	——
LXXVIII.	xiv. 13—23.	vi. 30—46.	ix. 10—17.	vi. 1—15.
LXXIX.	xiv. 24, *ad fin.*	vi. 47, *ad fin.*	——	vi. 16—21.
LXXX.	——	——	——	vi. 22—40.
LXXXI.	——	——	——	vi. 41—58.
LXXXII.	——	——	——	vi. 59, *ad fin.*
LXXXIII.	xv. 1—9.	vii. 1—13.	——	——
LXXXIV.	xv. 10—20.	vii. 14—23.	——	——
LXXXV.	xv. 21—29.	vii. 24, *ad fin.*	——	——
LXXXVI.	xv. 30, *ad fin.*	viii. 1—10.	——	——
LXXXVII.	xvi. 1—12.	viii. 11—21.	——	——
LXXXVIII.	xvi. 13—20.	viii. 22—30.	ix. 18—21.	——
LXXXIX.	xvi. 21, *ad fin.*	viii. 31 *ad fin.* ix. 1.	ix. 22—27.	——

Directions for reading the Family Expositor.

AS to the manner of reading this book in families, I would advise as follows:—First, Let the passage of Scripture be read from the *common translation* in the inner column, unless the family have their Bibles before them: then read the *new version* by itself, which is interwoven with the *paraphrase*, but distinguished by the *Italic character*; and then the *paraphrase* and *improvement*.

As for the *notes*, I should advise the person who officiates, to select such as are of most general concern, and read them after the paragraph to which they belong; for it is not so agreeable to interrupt the sense by introducing them before it is completed. Other *notes* may perhaps be more fitly made matter of conversation afterwards: but this is referred to the prudence of particular persons, who will judge with a regard to the state and character of the families in question.

In reading the *compound text*, it may be observed, that the words of the several *evangelists* are distinguished by *crotchets*, thus [ ]; and the *clauses* included within them are always marked with the name of the *evangelist* from whom they are taken, unless a *single text* only be added at the end of the verse, to which they must of course belong; or, where *more texts* than one are added, the *crotchets* which have nothing to distinguish them belong to the first.

I am pleased to think with how much ease any attentive reader will distinguish the *text* itself, from the *paraphrase*, in consequence of the extraordinary care which hath been taken to keep the work in that particular remarkably correct; for which, I am obliged to pay my public and most thankful acknowledgments to my worthy brother and friend, the Reverend Mr. *Godwin*, who generously undertook the great trouble, not only of revising each *sheet* as it came from the press, but also of inspecting the *manuscript* before it went thither, and of making several important alterations in it, very much for the better; of which, I should have been ready to have given a more particular account, if his modesty and goodness would have permitted it.

THE

FAMILY EXPOSITOR.

THE FORMER PART OF THE HISTORY OF CHRIST,

AS RECORDED BY THE EVANGELISTS.

SECT. I.

St. Luke's preface to his history, dedicated to Theophilus, a Christian friend, for whose comfort and establishment, he was particularly concerned. Luke I. ver. 1—4.

LUKE I. VER. 1.

FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

LUKE I. VER. 1.

WHEREAS many have undertaken[a] *to compose the history*[b] *of those important facts which have been confirmed among us* Christians *with the fullest* and most satisfactory *evidence*,[c] as the great foundation of our common faith; and since some of these historians have written,

SECT. I. Luke I. 1.

[a] *Whereas many have undertaken.*] This must refer to some histories of the life of Christ which are now lost; for Matthew and Mark, the only evangelists which can be supposed to have written before Luke, could not with any propriety be called *many*; and of these two, Matthew at least wrote from personal knowledge, not the testimony of others. One must readily conclude the books referred to are lost, as none of the apocryphal gospels now extant, published particularly by Fabricius, (in his Codex. Apoc. Nov. Test.) or Mr. Jones, (in his history of the Canon.) can with any shadow of reason pretend to equal antiquity with this of St. Luke. But I cannot, with Ambrose and Epiphanius, suppose, that the evangelist here intends the gospels of Basilides, Cerinthus, and some other early heretics; since he seems to allow these histories, whatever they were, to have been at least honestly written, according to information received from the most capable judges. And it is strange that Eusebius should imagine the words are intended as a severe censure on the now unknown compilers of these histories, whoever they were. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 24.

[b] *To compose the history.*] *To set forth in order a declaration* is so antiquated a phrase, that it would hardly be understood any where but here; at least I am sure none could by reading it, so much as guess at the elegance and propriety of St. Luke's words, ανατάξασθαι διηγησιν, which may more literally, and I think far more justly, be rendered, *to compose a history*: and I doubt not but our English word *compose*, may express as much regularity in the order of facts, as the evangelist meant to intimate.

[c] *Confirmed among us with the fullest evidence.*] I think πεπληροφορημενων is rather to be understood as referring to the *fulness* of that *evidence* with which the facts were *attended*, than to the *confidence* with which they were *believed*. This seems most honourable to the gospel; but as I know the word is ambiguous, and often used in the latter sense, I have chose to express that also in the paraphrase. Compare 2 Tim. iv. 5—17. Gr.

SECT. I. Luke I. 2.

not on their own personal knowledge, but *as they* (whether Apostles or others) *have transmitted them to us, who were* themselves *from the beginning* of Christ's ministry *eye-witnesses* of what passed, *and* in proof of the sincerity of their testimony, courageously became *ministers of the word*,[d] that is, of the gospel, amidst the
3 greatest opposition; *I also having accurately traced all* these *things*[e] *from their first rise*,[f] even from the very conception of John the Baptist, who was the forerunner of our Lord, *have thought it proper to write an orderly account of them*:[g] and I chuse to inscribe it *to thee, O most noble Theophilus*;[h] because, though thou art already in the general acquainted with
4 them, yet I cannot but be concerned *that thou mayest* more fully and circumstantially *know the* exact and *certain truth of those things in which thou hast* formerly *been instructed*[i] by those who were the happy instruments of initiat-

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word:

3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

[d] *Of the word.*] Some have conjectured that λογος, *the word*, here signifies Christ, as in the beginning of St. John's gospel: perhaps it may; but I did not think it so evident as to venture fixing it to that sense.

[e] *Having accurately traced all these things.*] The original, παρηκολουθηκοτι ασιν ακριβως, plainly signifies that accuracy of investigation on which the perfect understanding of his subject was built.

[f] *From their first rise.*] Some very pious and learned writers have pleaded this text as an argument for the inspiration of St. Luke's gospel, and consequently of the rest, because the word ανωθεν sometimes signifies *from above*, or *from heaven*; as it plainly doth, John iii. 31; Jam. i. 17; iii. 15, 17. But Luke so evidently uses it in the sense here given, Acts xxvi. 5. and that sense is so common elsewhere, and seems so absolutely necessary in this connection with παρηκολουθηκοτι, that I cannot think this text at all to the purpose. The argument I mention is one of those which, like pieces of superfluous armour, encumber rather than defend; and the more I am concerned about the conclusion here or elsewhere, the more cautious shall I always be, that I may not draw it from such premises.

[g] *To write an orderly account of them*, καθεξης σοι γραψαι.] It is chiefly on the authority of this clause that M. Le Clerc, and many other modern harmonizers, have thought (as Beza also did) that all the other gospels are to be reduced to the order of Luke, wherever they differ from it: a conclusion which I apprehend, for reasons that shall afterwards be given at large, to be an occasion of many errors, and particularly injurious to the character of St. Matthew. I would only here observe, that the foundation of it is very precarious; since it is evident, this evangelist might, with great propriety be said to have given *an orderly account* of the history of Christ, as the leading facts are in their due series, though some particulars are transposed.

[h] *O most noble Theophilus.*] That Theophilus is the name of a particular person eminent in the church in those early days, and not, (as Salvian thought it,) a general title applicable to every Christian as a lover of God, Dr. Whitby, after many others, hath abundantly proved. What his rank in life was, we do not indeed certainly know; but it seems, that it was pretty considerable; for κρατιστε was then, as *Excellency* among us is, a title of honour and respect usual in addressing noble personages (see Acts xxiii. 26; xxiv. 3; xxvi. 25), and it might with some peculiar propriety be applied here, as Theophilus was so worthy the name he bore, which signifies a true *lover of God*.

[i] *Hast been instructed*, κατηχηθης.] The word doth with great accuracy express the instructions given to those who

ing thee into the Christian faith; and I am persuaded, thou wilt be greatly confirmed in it, by the attentive perusal of that history with which I here present thee. SECT. I.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us humbly adore the Divine Goodness, that facts of so great importance as these now to be laid before us, were not left to the uncertainty of oral tradition; but delivered to the church in writing, by persons who had so many opportunities of learning the truth, and have given such full proof of their integrity in relating it.—Let us be thankful that we have not only one such history, but that several undertook this excellent and necessary work, by whose united testimony the whole is confirmed; while it is also illustrated by the variety of their narrations, each inserting some considerable circumstance which the rest have omitted. Let us rejoice in that providential care, which hath preserved this invaluable treasure through so many succeeding ages, and some of them periods of the grossest darkness, and the hottest persecution. Verse 2 3

While we study this *orderly series* of sacred story, let us be concerned that our faith may be established by it, and our other graces proportionably advanced; maintaining a continual dependence on that blessed Spirit, by whose instruction it was written, to lead us into wise and pious reflections upon it. 4

To conclude; from the care which this holy evangelist expresseth for the edification and comfort of his friend Theophilus, let us learn to regard it as one of the most important offices of friendship, to labour for the spiritual advantage of each other; by endeavouring not only to awaken and instruct those that are entirely unacquainted or unaffected with divine things, but also, as we have opportunity, to confirm the faith and quicken the zeal of the most established Christians with whom we converse. Happy the men whose tongues and whose pens are employed in so good a work: may they never, in the remotest ages, fail of some *excellent Theophilus*, to welcome and encourage their pious attempts! 5

SECT. II.

St. John begins his gospel with a very sublime and emphatical account of the deity and incarnation of Christ; and of those glorious and important purposes for which he condescended to appear among us in the human nature. John I. 1—14.

JOHN I. 1.

IN the beginning

JOHN I. 1.

IN the beginning, before the foundation of the world, or the first production of any created

were training up for an admission to the Christian church, whose name of *catechumens* was, as it is well known, derived from hence, and applied without any

SECT. II. John I. 1.

was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.

being, a glorious Person *existed*, who (on account of the perfections of his nature and his being in time the medium of divine manifestations to us) may properly be called *the word* of God.[a] *And the word was* originally *with God* the Father of all; so that to him the words of Solomon might justly be applied, Prov. viii. 30; "He was by him as one brought up with him, "and was daily his delight." Nay, by a generation which none can declare, *and* an union which none can fully conceive, *the word was* himself *God*,[b] that is, possessed of a nature truly

particular regard to the age of the persons concerned. Compare Acts xviii. 25; Rom. ii. 18. I endeavour to express this in the paraphrase; but it would be very improper to use the English word which most literally answers to the Greek, because that is now almost wholly appropriated to children.

[a] *The word* of God.] The Greek *logos* is now become so familiar to an English ear, that I doubt not but most of my readers would have understood me had I retained it in my translation; which, on account of the singularity of the idea here signified by it, I should have done had I not feared it might have been unintelligible to a few at least, and so have impaired the pleasure they might find in so excellent a passage. I know that some of the fathers render *logos*, *reason*, as M. Le Clerc doth; though I apprehend they mean it in a very different sense from him, who seems to understand it only as a strong eastern phrase, to signify the consummate wisdom of the gospel scheme. See his Harmony, p. 44. But this will entirely enervate and destroy the sense of ver. 14, as well as of those texts which speak of Christ's *coming out from God, enjoying glory with him before the world was*, &c.

[b] *The word was God.*] I know how eagerly many have contended that the word God is used here in an inferior sense; the necessary consequence of which is (as indeed some have expressly avowed it) that this clause should be rendered, *The word was a god*, that is, a kind of inferior deity, as *governors* are called *gods*. See John x. 34, and 1 Cor. viii. 5. But it is impossible he should here be so called merely as a *governor*, because he is spoken of as existing before the production of any creatures whom he could govern: and it is to me most incredible that when the Jews were so exceedingly averse to idolatry, and the Gentiles so unhappily prone to it, such a plain writer as this apostle should lay so dangerous a stumbling-block on the very threshold of his work, and represent it as the Christian doctrine, that *in the beginning* of all things there were *two Gods*, one supreme and the other subordinate: a difficulty which, if possible, would be yet farther increased by recollecting what so many ancient writers assert, that this gospel was written with a particular view of opposing the Corinthians and Ebionites, (see *Iren.* l. i. c. 26; l. iii. c. 11; *Euseb. Eccl. Hist.* l. vi. c. 14), on which account a greater accuracy of expression must have been necessary. There are so many instances in the writings of this apostle, and even in this chapter (see ver. 6, 12, 13, 18.) where Θεος, without the article is used to signify *God* in the highest sense of the word, that it is something surprising such a stress should be laid on the want of that article, as a proof that it is used only in a subordinate sense.—On the other hand to conceive of *Christ* as a *distinct* and *co-ordinate God*, would be equally inconsistent with the most express declarations of *scripture*, and far more irreconcileable with *reason*. Nothing I have said above, can by any means be justly interpreted in such a sense: and I here solemnly disclaim the least intention of insinuating one thought of that kind, by any thing I have ever written here or elsewhere.——The order of the words in the original (Θεος ην ο λογος), is such, that some have thought the clause might more exactly be translated, *God was the word*. But there are almost every where so many instances of such a construction as our version supposes, that I chose rather to follow it than to vary from it unnecessarily, in this important passage.—I am deeply sensible of the sublime and mysterious nature of the doctrine of *Christ's deity*, as here declared: but it would be

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

and properly divine. I repeat it again, that the condescension of his incarnation may be more attentively considered, *this* divine [*word*] *was in the* very *beginning with God*, and, by virtue of his most intimate union with him, was possessed of infinite glory and felicity. And when it pleased God to begin his work of creation, *all things* in the whole compass of nature *were made by him*,[c] even by this almighty word; *and without him was not* any thing *made*, not *so*

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

SECT. II. John I. 2.

quite foreign to my purpose to enter into a large discussion of that great foundation of our faith; it has often been done by much abler hands. It was, however, matter of conscience with me, on the one hand, thus strongly to declare my belief of it: and, on the other, to leave it as far as I could in the simplicity of scripture expressions. I shall only add in the words, or at least in the sense, of Bishop Burnet, "That had not St. John "and the other apostles thought it a doc-"trine of great importance in the gospel "scheme, they would rather have wav-"ed than asserted and insisted upon it, "considering the critical circumstances "in which they wrote." See *Burnet on the Articles*, page 40.

[c] *All things were made by him.*] It would be the work of a treatise rather than a note to represent the Jewish doctrine of the creation of all things by the divine *Logos*; to which (rather than the platonic) there may be some reference here. They who have no opportunity of examining the original authors, may see what those learned men have said, to whom Dr. A. Taylor refers in his *Treatise on the Trinity*, p. 258; to which add, *Dr. Pearson on the Creed*, p. 118; *Dr. Scott's Christian Life*, Vol. III. p. 565. &c. fol. and *Dr. Watts's Dissertation on the Trinity*. No. IV. § 3.—There is, however, a remarkable passage I shall mention to this purpose as a specimen of the rest; and the rather because it is omitted in most of the collections I have seen on this head, and not fully cited and explained in what I take to be its exact sense in any. Philo Judæus (*de Profug.* p. 465), speaking of the *cherubims on the mercy seat* as symbolical representations of what he calls *the creating and governing powers*, makes this additional reflection: "The divine Word (*Logos*) is above "these, of whom we can have no idea "by the sight or any other sense; he "being himself *the image of God*, the "eldest of all intelligent beings, sitting "nearest to Him who is truly THE "HOLY ONE, there being no distance "between them:" (alluding I suppose, to the form of those *ancient chariots* where, as in the *chairs* we use upon the road, the driver sat close to the person driven; which was not the case in all: compare Acts viii. 38). "And therefore he (that "is, God) says, *I will speak unto thee* "*from the mercy seat between the two che-*"*rubims*; thereby representing the *Lo-*"*gos* as the charioteer by whom the "motion of these powers is directed; "and himself who speaks to him as the "rider (or person carried) who com-"mands the charioteer how he is to "manage the reins." Ο δε υπερανω τουτον (scil. δυναμεως ποιητικης και βασιλικης) ΛΟΓΟΣ ΘΕΙΟΣ, εις ορατην ουκ ηλθεν ιδεαν, ατε μηδενι των κατ' αισθησιν εμφερης ων, αλλ' αυτος εικων υπαρχων Θεου, των νοητων απαξ απαντων ο πρεσβυτατος, ο εγγυτατος, μηδενος οντος μεθοριου διαστηματος, ΤΟΥ ΜΟΝΟΥ ο εστιν αψευδως αφιδρυμενος. Λεγεται γαρ, Λαλησω σοι ανωθεν τε Ιλαστηριου ανα μεσον των δυοιν Χερυβειμ· ωςθ' ηνιοχον μεν ειναι των δυναμεων τον ΛΟΓΟΝ, εποχον δε τον λαλουντα, επικελευομενον τω ηνιοχω τα προς ορθην του παντος ηνιοχησιν. I insert this as a key to a great many other passages in Philo; and shall only mention one more (*De Agricult.* p. 195), where he represents God as "governing the "whole course of nature, both in heaven "and earth, as the great Shepherd and "King, by wise and righteous laws: "having constituted his unerring "Word, his only begotten Son, to pre-"side as his viceroy over this holy "flock;" for the illustration of which, he quotes those remarkable words, Exod. xxiii. 23, though in a form something different from our reading and version, "*Behold, I am; I will send my Angel be-*"*fore thy face to keep thee in the way.*" Γην και υδωρ κ. τ. λ. —— τα μεν θνητα, τα δε θεια, (a remarkable distribution) ως ποιμην και βασιλευς ο Θεος αγει κατα δικην και νομον, προστησαμενος τον ορθον αυτου

SECT. II.

John I. 4.

much as one single being,[d] whether among the noblest or the meanest of God's various works. *That* fulness of power, wisdom, and benignity, *which was in him, was* the fountain of *life*[e] to the whole creation: *and* it is in particular, our concern to remember, that *the life* which was in him, *was the light of men*, as all the light of reason and revelation was the effect of his energy on the mind. *And the light* long shone in the heathen world, and under the dispensation of Moses; and it still *shineth in darkness*, even on the minds of the most ignorant and prejudiced part of mankind; *and* yet *the darkness* was so gross that it opposed its passage; and such was the prevailing degeneracy of their hearts, that they *did not apprehend it*,[f] or regard its dictates in such a manner as to secure the blessings to which it would have led them.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of man.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

6 As this was the case for many ages, the Divine Wisdom was pleased to interpose in these latter days by a clearer and fuller discovery: and for this purpose, *a man, whose name was John*, afterwards called the Baptist, *was sent* as a messenger *from God;* of whose miraculous conception and important ministry, a more particular account is elsewhere given: But here it may be sufficient to observe in general, that though he was himself, in an inferior sense, "a burning "and shining light," (compare John v. 35.) yet *he came* only under the character of a servant, and *for a witness that he might testify concerning* Christ *the* true *light, that all* who heard his

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

ΛΟΓΟΝ ψιλολογουν υιον, ος της επιμελειαν της εισας ταυτης αγιλης, οια τι μεγαλου βασιλεως υπαρχος, διαδεξεται. Και γαρ ειρηται που, Ιδου εγω ειμι, αποστελω αγγελον μου εις προσωπον σου του φυλαξαι σε εν τη οδω.

[d] *Not so much as one single being.*] There is an emphasis in the words ως εν, which I thought it proper to express in the version, than which nothing can be more literal.

[e] *That which was in him was life.*] The most ancient fathers that quote this text so generally join the words ο γεγονεν with this fourth verse, that I cannot but apprehend this to be the true reading. (See Dr. Whitby's Prolog.) But if any think it improbable that γεγονεν should have different senses here, and in the third verse, they will please to observe, that the full sense of our version is expressed in the paraphrase, and that the alteration here made is of very small importance. That the Heathens sometimes speak of their deities and heroes as the light and life of mankind, Elsner hath shewn on this text.

[f] *Did not apprehend it,* ου κατελαβεν.] It might not seem so strange that the world did not fully comprehend the *spiritual*, since it certainly doth not fully comprehend the *material* light, nor indeed any of the most familiar objects it discovers: but the word is capable of other senses, and is sometimes used for *apprehending* or laying hold of a thing, 1 Cor. ix. 24; Phil. iii. 12, 13; and sometimes for *perceiving* it, Acts. iv. 13; x. 34. Compare Acts xiv. 17; xvii. 25; Rom. i. 20; which all illustrate the evangelist's assertion.

discourses *might by his means* be engaged to *believe* and follow that divine illumination. And accordingly he most readily confessed, that *he* himself *was not that Light, but* only [*came*] *to bear witness concerning it.* *The true Light* of which he spake *was* Christ,[g] even *that* Sun of righteousness and Source of truth, *which, coming into the world, enlighteneth every man,*[h] dispersing his beams, as it were from one end of the heavens to the other, to the Gentile world, which was in midnight darkness, as well as to the Jews, who enjoyed but a kind of twilight. *He was in the world* in a human form; *and* though *the world was made by him,*[i] *yet the world knew* and acknowledged *him not.* Yea, *he came into his own* [*territories,*] even to the Jewish nation, which was under such distinguished obligations to him, and to whom he had been so expressly promised as their great Messiah; *yet his own* [*people*] *did not receive him*[k] as they ought; but,

SECT. II. John I. 8.

8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

9 *That* was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

g *The true light was* Christ.] The original yet more clearly expresses the antithesis between this and the former verse: I have endeavoured to follow it in my version without supposing αυτος understood here to answer to εκεινος there. I cannot but think the conjecture of the learned Heinsius very elegant, that the ην at the beginning of this verse might belong to the end of the former: the exact construction then would be, He, viz. John, *was not that light, but he was,* (that is, he existed and came) *that he might bear witness to that light: the true light,* &c. *was in the world,* &c. See *Heins. in loc.*

h *Which coming into the world, enlighteneth every man.*] So I chuse to render it, though I acknowledge that our version may be consistent with the truth, and that it most exactly suits the order of the words in the original; but the other is also very grammatical; φως ερχομενον εις τον κοσμον, and suggests an idea more distinct from ver. 4. Not to urge that the phrase, of *coming into the world,* is with peculiar emphasis used of *Christ,* and especially under the notion of a *light.* Compare John xii. 46. *I am come a light into the world.* John iii. 19. *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world.*

i *The world was made by him.*] Some have supposed this particularly levelled against the Gnostics, who maintained that the world was made by an evil genius; and that the God of the Old Testament and the New, were different and contrary persons. It is certain, that Irenæus, and several others of the fathers, with great propriety have urged this text against that mad notion.—— Eusebius exposes these wretches in a very just and lively manner, and makes use of words, which, if he had been our contemporary, might have seemed directly levelled at a late unhappy writer, who strangely took it into his head to call himself *The moral philosopher.* But, alas! every succeeding age has had its *moral philosophers,* who have attempted to remove that burthensome stone *the Bible,* and have found it returning upon them, so as to *grind them,* and their schemes, and their confidence, *to powder.* The words in my view are these: (*Euseb. Eccles Hist.* lib. v. cap. 28. *in fin.*) Αλλως αρνησαμενοι τον τε νομον και τους προφητας, ανομου και αθεου διδασκαλιας, ψευδοφωνει χαριτος, εις εσχατον απωλειας ολεθρον κατωλισθησαν. "Some" (who yet, it seems, pretended to be Christians) "absolutely rejecting the law and the "prophets, by a licentious and atheistical doctrine, which they introduced under a pretence of magnifying "the divine goodness, or the gospel," (for χαριτος, *grace,* may signify either) "have plunged themselves into the lowest gulf of perdition."

k *He came into his own* [*territories*], *yet his own* [*people*] *did not receive him.*] It is

SECT. II.

John I. 12.

on the contrary, treated him in the most contemptuous and ungrateful manner. *Nevertheless* the detriment was theirs, and it was indeed unspeakably great to them; for *to as many as received him, and* by a firm and lively faith *believed on his name* [*even*] *to* all of *them*, without any exception of even the poorest or the vilest, *he granted the* glorious *privilege of becoming the sons of God;* that is, he adopted them into God's family, so that they became entitled to the present immunities and the future eternal inheri-

13 tance of his children. And they *who* thus believed on him *were* possessed of these privileges, *not* in consequence of their being *born of blood*, of their being descended from the loins of the holy patriarchs, or sharing in circumcision and the blood of the sacrifices; *nor* could they ascribe it merely to *the will of the flesh*, or to their own superior wisdom and goodness, as if, by the power of corrupted nature alone, they had made themselves to differ; *nor* to *the will of man*, or to the wisest advice and most powerful exhortations which their fellow-creatures might address to them; *but* most humbly acknowledge that they were born *of God*,[1] and indebted to the efficacious influences of his regenerating grace for all their privileges and for all their hopes. Compare John iii. 1—8; 1 Tit. iii. 3—7; and Jam. i. 18.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

so difficult to express the difference between τις τα ιδια, and οι ιδιοι, that few versions have attempted it; yet as Grotius hath well observed, the energy of the text cannot be understood without attending to it. That the Jewish nation was, in some peculiar sense, under the care and guardianship of Christ before his incarnation, this passage seems strongly to intimate; and many learned men have shewn it, in what appears to me a convincing light.

[1] *Who were not born of blood, &c. but of God.*] I am sensible this verse is liable to great difficulty and ambiguity. It is an amazing liberty the author of the *New Translation*, published 1727, has taken with it, in explaining it of *a birth which they had not from circumcision, nor from the constitution of the body, nor from the institution of man, but from God.* I readily allow that εξ αιμαλων, *of bloods*, may include circumcision, but cannot confine it to that: patriarchal descent and the blood of sacrifices were so much depended upon by the Jews, that one would suppose them included. Dr. Whitby, with many others, takes *the will of the flesh* to signify carnal descent: and the *will of man* adoption; which I should prefer to the opinion of Mess. L'enfant and Beausobre, who, without any reason assigned, understand by those *born of the will of man*, proselytes, as opposed to native Jews; a sense in which I never could find the phrase used. The paraphrase I have given keeps the ideas distinct; answers the frequent signification of *flesh* elsewhere; (compare John iii. 6; Rom. vii. 25; viii. 3, 8 12; and Gal. v. 17;) and conveys an important and edifying sense, very agreeable to the tenor of scripture. But I submit it to the reader without pretending that it is the only interpretation the words will bear. I hope he will always carefully distinguish between the text and the paraphrase, and remember how very different a regard is owing to the one and the other.

14 And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.

And in order to raise us sinful creatures to such illustrious dignity and happiness, *the* divine and eternal *word*, that glorious Person whom we mentioned above, by a most amazing condescension *was made flesh*,[m] that is, united himself to our inferior and miserable nature with all its innocent infirmities; *and* he not only made us a transient visit for an hour or a day, but for a considerable time *pitched his tabernacle among us*[n] on earth; *and we* who are now recording these things *contemplated his glory*, (compare 1 John i. 1.) with so strict an attention, that from our own personal knowledge, we can bear our testimony to it, that it was in every respect *such a glory as became the Only-begotten of the Father*; for it shone forth, not merely in that radiant appearance which invested him on the mount of transfiguration, and in the splendour of his continued miracles, but in all his temper, ministration, and conduct, through the whole series of his life, in which he appeared *full of grace and truth*;[o] that is, as he was in himself most benevolent and upright, so he made the amplest discoveries of pardon to sinners, which the Mosaic dispensation could not possibly do, and exhibited the most important and substantial blessings,[p] whereas that was at best but "a shadow of good things to come." Compare Heb. x. 1.

SECT. II. John I. 14.

IMPROVEMENT.

Justly hath our Redeemer said, *Blessed is the man that is not offended in me*: and we may peculiarly apply the words to that great and glorious doctrine of *the deity of Christ*, which is here before us. A thousand high and curious thoughts will naturally arise in our corrupt hearts on this view of it; but may Divine

Verse 1, 2.

[m] *Was made flesh.*] *Flesh* often signifies man in this infirm and calamitous state. Compare Gen. vi. 12; Numb. xvi. 22; Deut. v. 26; Psal. cxlv. 21; Isa. xlix. 26; Acts ii. 17; 1 Cor. i. 29; and many other places.

[n] *Pitched his tabernacle among us.*] There is so visible a reference in the word εσκηνωσεν, to the dwelling of the *Shechinah* in the *tabernacle of Moses*, that it is very proper to render it by the word I have used.

[o] *Full of grace and truth.*] It is plain that those words, *and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father*, are to be considered as a parenthesis; and these are to be joined with the preceding thus, *He dwelt among us full of grace and truth.* But the length of the paraphrase made it inconvenient to transpose them.

[p] The most substantial blessings.] That *truth* is sometimes used, not so much in opposition to falsehood, as to hieroglyphics, shadows, and types, an attentive reader must often have observed. See Heb. viii. 2; ix. 24; and Dan. vii. 16. Compare Col. ii. 17.

SECT. II. Grace subdue them all to the obedience of an humble faith; so that, with Thomas, we may each of us fall down at his feet, and cry out with sincere and unreserved devotion, *My Lord, and my God!*

Verse 3, 4 Let us adore him as the Creator and Preserver of all, the overflowing Fountain of *light and life*. Let us with unutterable pleasure hail this *Sun of righteousness*, whose rays, *by the tender mercies* of the Father, have *visited* our benighted world to 5 *guide our feet into the way of peace:* and while we lament that *the darkness* hath not *apprehended* and received him, let us earnestly pray, that he may ere long penetrate every cloud of ignorance and mist of error, and may diffuse among all the nations, knowledge and grace, purity and joy. Let us especially pray, that he may penetrate our beclouded souls; and that they may, in holy correspondence to the purposes of his appearing, 10 be *turned as clay to the seal.*[q] Job xxxviii. 14.—*The world knew him not;* but may we know him, and give him that honourable and grateful reception which so great a favour may justly demand!—Yet what returns can be proportionable to his 11 condescension, *in becoming flesh* for us, and *pitching his tabernacle* among miserable and sinful mortals?—Happy apostles, that *beheld his glory!* And surely there are in his word such reflections of it as we may also *behold*, and as will oblige us to acknowledge it to be *a glory* that *became the only begotten of the Father.*

Let us cordially receive him, *as full of grace and truth*, that 12 we also may stand entitled to the privileges of *God's children.* And if we are already of that happy number, let us not arrogate the glory of it to ourselves, or ascribe it entirely to those who have been the instruments of this important change; but 13 remember that *of his own will, God hath begotten us by the word of his power*, and that *of him we are in Christ Jesus:* to him then let us refer the ultimate praise, if that divine and almighty Saviour be *made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.* 1 Cor. i. 30.

SECT. III.

An angel appears to Zacharias to give him notice of the birth of John the Baptist; and his mother on her conception retires. Luke I. 5—25.

LUKE I. 5. LUKE I. 5.

SECT. III. *IN the days of Herod* the Great, whom the Romans had made *king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, who belonged to* that THERE was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest, nam-

Luke I. 5.

[q] *Turned as clay to the seal.*] This beautiful metaphor of the inspired writer seems, by a very expressive contrast to illustrate the meaning of κ κατελαβεν, in the fifth verse. It was for want of this, *the darkness did not apprehend*, or receive

SECT. III.

Luke I. 5.

ed Zacharias of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elizabeth.

course of priests in the temple which was called *the course of Abiah:* as Abiah was the head of one of the twenty-four courses, into which David distributed the priests, (compare 1 Chron. xxiii. 6, and xxiv. 10), whose memory was still kept up, though none of his line returned from the captivity: *And his wife,* (that is, the wife of Zacharias,) *was one of the daughters* of the honourable family *of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both* of them per-

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

6 sons of a very fair character among men; and not only so, but sincerely and eminently *righteous in the sight of God, walking* before him in the simplicity of their hearts, *in* a faithful observance of *all the* moral *commands*, as well as ceremonial ordinances *and institutions*[a] *of the Lord,* in a very *blameless* and exemplary manner. *And they had no child, because Eli-*

7 And they had no child, because that Elizabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

7 *zabeth was barren;* and so pious a man as Zacharias was, would not, on any terms, think of taking another wife, while she lived:[b] *and* indeed, there was no human prospect that their family would ever be built up, because *they were both* very far *advanced in years.*

8 And it came to pass that, while he executed the priest's office before God, in the order of his course,

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

And it came to pass, that when he was at 8
Jerusalem, *performing the priest's office before God, in the order of his course,* or of the class to which he belonged. *According to the cus-* 9
tom of assigning the respective offices *of the priesthood* to particular persons then in waiting, which was done by lot, it so happened, that *his lot was* then to perform the most honourable service of daily ministration, that is, *to burn incense* on the golden altar, which was before the Lord, contiguous to the holy of holies. (Exod. xxx. 7; xl. 5—26.) This he accordingly did, *when he went into the temple of the Lord,* either at the time of morning or evening

the light; did not form itself into a due correspondence to it, so as to put on its habit, and clothe itself with the lustre of its reflected beams. How glorious and happy is that soul on which the knowledge of Christ hath that genuine influence!

[a] Moral *commands*, as well as ceremonial *institutions.*] Some have thought this distinction too nice: but it is certain the word δικαιωμασι is sometimes used to signify *ceremonial institutions* (see Heb. ix. 1—10), though it is often taken in a much more extensive sense. It is, however, evident, that all expressed in the *paraphrase* must be intended in the *text*, since under the Jewish dispensation, they could not have approved themselves *upright before God*, without an obedient regard to the ceremonial law.

[b] Taking another wife while she lived.] *Polygamy*, as well as *divorce*, were, for the hardness of their hearts, tolerated among the Jews: but they seem both to have been, in this age at least, disapproved by persons of the best character. Compare Mal. ii. 14—16; and 1 Tim. iii. 2.

SECT. III. Luke I. 20.

sacrifice. *And the whole multitude* of pious Jews assembled for divine worship (according to the usual custom *of the people* at that time), *were praying without* in the courts of the temple *at the time of incense*[c] to declare their concurrence with the priest in that intercession which he was making to God on their account. Compare Rev. viii 3, 4.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without, at the time of incense.

11 *And*, while Zacharias was in the midst of his devotions, on a sudden, *there appeared to him* a person, whom, by the form and manner of his appearance, he immediately knew to be *an angel of the Lord;* and he was *standing at the right hand of the altar of incense*, before which he was then ministering.

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

12 *And Zacharias, seeing* [*him*], though he was a man of such remarkable and experienced piety, *was greatly discomposed, and* an unusual *terror fell upon him.*

12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13 *But the angel* immediately scattered his fears, and *said unto him* with great gentleness of aspect and voice, *Fear not, Zacharias; for* I come unto thee with no message of terror, but, on the contrary, I am sent to assure thee that *thy* frequently repeated *prayer* for the redemption of Israel, as well as that which thou hast formerly offered for a blessing on thine own family, *is* at length *heard:*[d] *and* in proof of it I add, that *Elizabeth thy wife shall* ere long *bear thee a son* to comfort thee in this thy declining age; *and*, in token of the gracious regard of God to him, *thou*

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias; for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt

[c] *Were praying without at the time of incense.*] This was the foundation of that elegant figure by which *prayer* is so often compared to *incense*, (see Psal. cxli. 2; Mal. I. 11: Rev. viii. 3, 4.) and perhaps one reason of ordaining *incense* might be to intimate the acceptableness of those pious *prayers* which were to accompany it. And indeed burning fragrant perfumes was, and in the eastern nations still is so important a part of the entertainment of illustrious families, that one might well expect it in the house of God.—It is so plain that this was only an office of *daily ministration*, and that Zacharias was one of the *ordinary priests*, that one cannot but be surprised that any should ever conclude from this circumstance of the story that Zacharias was sagan, or assistant to the high priest, and was now performing his grand office on the day of atonement, and so on this foundation, should calculate the birth of John the Baptist, and of Christ, and all the other feasts which depend upon them: yet this is done in the calendars both of the Roman and Greek church.

[d] *Thy prayer is heard.*] No doubt he had often prayed for children; but as he seems now to have given up all expectations of that kind, it is reasonable to conclude that these words chiefly relate to his prayers for the deliverance of Israel by the Messiah, whose appearance was then expected by pious persons conversant in the sacred writings (Luke ii. 25—38; xix. 11; xxiii. 51), and the more earnestly desired just at this time, as they suffered so many grievous things by the oppression of the Romans and the tyranny of Herod, which toward the close of his reign grew more and more insupportable.

call his name John.

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobe-

SECT. III.

Luke I. 14.

shall call his name John,[e] that is, the grace and favour of God; to intimate that the Divine Grace shall, in a very eminent manner, be upon him. *And* this intimation shall be abundantly answered: for he shall be a person of so distinguished a character, that *thou shalt have joy and transport*[f] in him; *and many* others *shall* also have reason to *rejoice* with thee *on occasion of his birth*. *For he shall be great*, not in circumstances of outward dignity and splendour, but, what is infinitely more important, *in the sight of the Lord* even Jehovah his God, whose approbation is the highest glory: *and*, in token of his being in a peculiar manner separated to his service, (like the ancient Nazarites, Numb. vi. 3.) *he shall drink neither wine nor* any other sort of *intoxicating liquor; and he shall be* so early remarkable for wisdom and piety, that he shall appear to be *filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb*. *And*, thus trained up, and animated for service, *he shall*, when he appears under a public character, *turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God*; whose ways they have so generally forsaken, even while they are professing themselves to be his peculiar people, and boasting in such an extraordinary relation to him. *And*, to prepare them to receive the Lord their God appearing in the person of the Messiah, *he shall go before him*, as an illustrious harbinger, *in the spirit and power of Elijah*; that is, animated by the same sanctity, courage, and zeal for reformation which appeared so remarkable in that celebrated prophet: and, according to that prediction of Malachi, (with which the sacred canon concludes, Mal. iv. 6.) he shall meet with such glorious success in his ministry, as *to convert the hearts of the fathers with* those of *the children*;[g] that is,

15 16 17

[e] *Thou shalt call his name John.*] It was the office of the father to name the child. Compare verse 62. It is well known that this name, in Hebrew JOHANAN, (which occurs near thirty times in the Old Testament, though the English reader is not aware that it is the same,) is derived from JEHOVAH and CHEN, and properly signifies *the grace and favour of the Lord*. Elhanan, and many of the other proper names among the Hebrews, had such a kind of signification, and probably were given in token of their good wishes to the infant that received them.

[f] *Joy and transport.*] Αγαλλιασις properly answers to the word *exultation*, or *leaping for joy*, and is far more expressive than *gladness*. Compare 1 Pet. i. 8; iv. 13; and Mat. v. 12; in which last places we render it by being *exceeding glad*.

[g] *To convert the hearts of the fathers with those of the children;* επιστρεψαι καρ-

SECT. III. Luke I. 17

he shall bring many both of the rising and the declining age, to that real piety towards God, which will be the surest band of their mutual duty towards each other: *and* many of *those who have* hitherto *been disobedient to the wisdom of the just*; that is, insensible of the obligations to real religion, which is the greatest wisdom, *shall he make ready*, as *a people prepared for the Lord*, raising in their minds an expectation of the Messiah, and a disposition to welcome him when he shall appear.

dient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

18 *And Zacharias* then *said to the angel, By what* sign *shall I know* that *this* desirable and wonderful event shall be accomplished? *for* in the course of nature, it seems most improbable; since *I am an old man, and my wife* is also considerably *advanced in years.*

18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

19 *And the angel answering, said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God*, and near the throne of his Majesty, as one of the chief officers in his celestial court; of whose appearance to Daniel thou hast so frequently read, (Dan. viii. 16; ix. 21.) *and* it is by a peculiar favour that *I am* now *sent to speak to thee* in this form of unusual condescension, *and to tell thee these joyful tidings.* My very appearance ought therefore to have been owned, as a sufficient confirmation of the truth of my message; especially by thee, who canst not but know, how frequently in Israel the most illustrious persons have been raised up from parents

19 And the angel, answering, said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

20 who had long been barren.[h] *And*, since thou dost not acquiesce in this, God will give thee a

20 And, behold, thou

διας παλιρων επι τεκνα.] Here is a plain allusion to Mal. iv. 6; where it is said (as we render it) that *Elijah shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers:* "LEB "ABOTH AL BENIM," which the Seventy render, καρδιαν παλρος προς υιον; in which words it is quoted Eccles. xlviii. 10: but St. Luke's version seems as agreeable to the Hebrew. I thought Sir Norton Knatchbull's reason sufficient to justify my rendering it as I have done; which is just as our translators have rendered the like phrase, Judith ix. 10. δουλον τη' αρχοντι, και αρχοντα επι δυναστοις, *the servant with the prince, and the prince with the servant.* But, as Mr. L'Enfant and others, not without some probability, render it, *to reconcile fathers and children*, supposing it may relate to domestic dissensions, inseparable from the variety of religious sects then amongst the Jews, I was willing to comprehend that sense in my paraphrase.—Sir Norton Knatchbull's manner of pointing the last clause of the verse appeared to me so elegant, that I could not but follow it. Elsner would render it nearly in the same sense, *By the wisdom of the just, to prepare the disobedient as a people furnished for the Lord*, or formed for him. (Compare Isa. xlii. 7. Septuag.) See *Elsner. Observ.* Vol. I. p. 170—173.

[h] From parents who had long been barren.] Zacharias being so pious a priest, could not but often have read the account

shalt be dumb and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words which shall be fulfilled in their season.

sign; which while it confirms thy faith, shall also intimate his displeasure against this sinful mixture of unbelief: for, *behold thou shalt*, from this moment, *be silent and unable to speak* any more, *till the day in which these things shall be accomplished*, even till the day in which the child shall be born; *because thou hast not* immediately *believed my words, which* yet, through the divine indulgence and favour to thee, *shall be* assuredly *fulfilled in their season*, that is, as soon as thou canst reasonably expect after thy return home.

SECT. III. Luke I. 20.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

And the people, who stood without, *were waiting for Zacharias*, that he might dismiss them with his blessing, (Num. vi. 23—27; and Lev. ix. 22, 23.) *and* they *wondered that he continued so long in the temple*,[i] beyond the usual time: for he stayed a while after the angel disappeared, to present before God such humiliations and thanksgivings as this extraordinary circumstance required. 21

22 And when he came out he could not speak unto them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

But when he came out, he was not able to speak to them; and, by the consternation in which he appeared, *they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he himself, by signs, intimated* [*it*] *to them: and* he *continued deaf and dumb*[k] during the remainder of his stay at Jerusalem; a circumstance wisely ordered by Providence to awaken a greater and more general expectation as to the event of so strange an occurrence. 22

23 And it came to pass that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

And, after this appearance of the angel to him, *it came to pass that, when the* remaining *days of his ministration were fulfilled, he departed to his own house.* 23

24 And after those

And quickly *after these days* were ended, *Elizabeth his wife conceived*, according to the pre- 24

which the scripture gives of the birth of Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Samson, Samuel, &c. who were all descended from mothers that had been long barren. The resemblance in circumstances might well have produced a peculiar regard to them; and one would have imagined he must immediately have recollected the story of the angel's appearance to Manoah in particular, when the same scene was acted over before his own eyes, and some of the same expressions used by the celestial messenger. Compare Judg. xiii. 2.—14.

[i] *So long in the temple.*] All that is here recorded might have passed in a few minutes: it seems probable, therefore, that, since the people took notice of his continuing so much longer than ordinary in the holy place, he spent some time in secret devotion, where, in a mixture of holy affections rising on so great and extraordinary an occasion, he might easily forget how fast the moments passed away.

[k] *Deaf and dumb.*] As κωφος signifies *deaf*, (Mat. xi. 5; Mark vii. 32, 37; ix. 25; and Luke vii. 22.) as well as *dumb*, (Mat. ix. 33; xii. 22; xv. 31; and Luke xi. 14.) So it is plain from verse 62, that Zacharias lost his hearing, with his speech, during this interval.

SECT. III.

diction of the angel; *and*, apprehending her condition, she *concealed herself five months* in an obscure retirement, not only that her conception might more certainly appear, but chiefly that she might enjoy opportunity for those extraordinary devotions which this wonderful favour of Providence demanded: nor could she, under such a circumstance, refrain from *saying*,

Luke i. 24.

days his wife Elizabeth conceived and hid herself five months, saying,

25 The most solemn acknowledgments well become me, because *the Lord* himself *hath thus* miraculously interposed, and *done* this great work *for me*, in his own good time, even *in the days in which he hath* graciously *looked* down *upon me, to take away my reproach* of barrenness *among men*.[1] For barrenness was accounted a peculiar reproach among the Jews, who looked upon it as a singular happiness to be instrumental in multiplying the holy seed, according to the promises which God hath made them relating to it.

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me, in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

IMPROVEMENT.

How amiable is the character of this pious pair, who were found *walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless!* May our behaviour be thus unblameable, and our obedience thus sincere and universal! And let those, whose office leads them nearer to God than others, remember their peculiar obligation to imitate such an example.

Verse 6

13 Let us observe, with pleasure, that the *prayers* which such worshippers offer, *come up with acceptance* before God; to whom no costly perfume is so sweet as the fragrancy of a character like this.—*An answer of peace* was here returned when the case seemed to be most helpless. Let us learn to *wait patiently for*

[1] *My reproach among men.*] That *barrenness* was so amongst the Jews, appears from Gen. xxx. 23; 1 Sam. i. 11; Isa. iv. 1; liv. 1, 4; and many other passages. That a branch of the family of Aaron should fail, would also be looked upon as a particular calamity, and might, by ignorant and uncharitable people, be interpreted as a judgment: and so much the rather, considering the many promises God had made to increase the families of his obedient people, Exod. xxxii. 13; Lev. xxvi. 9; Deut. vii. 13; and Psal. cxxvii. 3, 4, 5.—I will here digress so far as to observe, that, considering how the whole *Jewish policy* was interwoven with those *acts of religion* which were to be performed by the priests *alone*, it might seem wonderful that no provision at all should be made for *entailing the priesthood* on any other family, if that of Aaron should happen to be *extinct*. Leaving this contingency unprovided for, was in effect putting the whole credit of the Jewish religion upon the perpetual continuance of the male branches of that family: an issue on which no man of Moses' prudence, nor indeed of common sense, would have rested his legislation, if he had not been truly conscious of its divine original; especially after two of Aaron's four sons had been cut off in one day for a rash act in the execution of their office, as soon as they were initiated into it, and died *without any children*. Num. iii. 4.

the Lord, and leave it to his own infinite wisdom to chuse the time and manner in which he shall appear for us. SECT. III.

Zacharias, accustomed as he was to converse with the God of heaven, was nevertheless, as we see, thrown into great consternation, at the *appearance* of his angelic messenger. And may we not regard it, therefore, as an instance of the goodness as well as wisdom of God, that he determines that the services which these heavenly spirits render us should be generally invisible?—It is delightful to observe that amiable condescension with which *Gabriel*, the courtier of heaven, behaved on this occasion. Let it teach us, with pleasure, to pursue the humblest offices of duty and love which God may assign us, towards any of our fellow-servants, even in the lowest stations. Verse 12 13, 19

Happy was the holy *Baptist* in being employed in this blessed work of preparing men's hearts to receive a Saviour, and reducing *the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.* May we be inspired with some degree of zeal like his, in our proper sphere, to pursue so noble a design! 17

We see in the instance of *Zacharias*, that some remainders of *unbelief* may be found even in a faithful heart: let us guard against them, as remembering they will be displeasing to God, and hurtful to ourselves.—And, to conclude, when Providence favours us with any peculiarly gracious interpositions, let us attentively remark the hand of God in them; and let religious *retirement* leave room for serious recollection and devout acknowledgments. 18, 20 24

SECT. IV.

The angel Gabriel is sent to the virgin Mary, to inform her of the conception of Christ by her, in which she humbly acquiesces. Luke I. 26—38.

LUKE I. 26.

AND in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth.

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David;

LUKE I. 26.

IN the sixth month after Elizabeth had conceived, *the* same *angel Gabriel*, who had been the messenger of such good news to Zacharias, *was sent from God to a* small and inconsiderable *city of Galilee*, which was *called*[a] *Nazareth*; being charged with an important commission *to a virgin*, who was *contracted*, according to the Jewish method of espousals, *to a man whose name was Joseph*: a descendant *of the* royal *house of David*; which illustrious family was now SECT. IV. Luke I. 26. 27

[a] *Nazareth.*] A city in the tribe of Zabulon, which was reduced to so low and contemptible a condition, that no good thing was expected from thence. John i. 46.

SECT. IV. reduced to so low a condition, that Joseph followed the employment of a carpenter: *and the virgin's name was Mary*, of the same lineage.

Luke I. 28 *And the angel entered in* to the room, in which she was alone; and standing before her, surrounded her with an extraordinary lustre, he addressed himself *unto her, and said, Hail, O thou* distinguished *favourite* of heaven! I congratulate thy happiness; for *the Lord is with thee*, and is about to manifest his condescending regard in a manner, which shall oblige all around thee to acknowledge that *thou art blessed among women*, the greatest and happiest of thy sex.

29 *Now* the pious and modest virgin, *when she saw* this appearance of [*the angel,*] and heard his message, as *she* plainly perceived it to be something of a very extraordinary nature, *was* much *disturbed at his discourse;*[b] *and*, not imagining herself at all worthy of such applause and congratulation, she *reasoned with herself*, for a while, *what kind of salutation this could be*,[c] and from what original it could proceed.

30 *And the angel*, immediately perceiving it, to disperse the doubt she was in, *said unto her* again, *Fear not, Mary; for* I am a messenger sent from heaven to tell thee that *thou hast*

31 *found* signal *favour with God. And behold* and observe it with due regard, for I assure thee, in his name, that from this very time, *thou shalt be with child, and* at the proper season shalt *be delivered of a son, and shalt call his name Jesus*, the divine Saviour; for he shall come on that important errand, to save men from the

32 tyranny of sin and the displeasure of God. *He shall be* incomparably *great and* glorious, insomuch that he *shall* justly *be called the Son of the Most High* God; *and the Lord God shall give him the throne of David his father*, from whom thou art descended; so that, like David, he shall be the Sovereign of God's chosen people, and possess that extensive empire which was promised to the seed of that holy patriarch: (2 Sam. vii. 12, 13; Psal. ii. 7, 8; and Psal. cxxxii. 11, 12.)

and the virgin's name *was* Mary.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured; the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

29 And when she saw *him* she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favour with God.

31 And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

[b] *She was disturbed at his discourse.*] Some would render ετι τω λογω αυτε, *on account of him*: and Heinsius hath abundantly shewn how common this manner of speaking is in the sacred writings.

[c] *What kind of salutation.*] She seems to have suspected it might possibly proceed from the artifice of some evil spirit, to inspire her with sentiments of vanity and pride.

SECT. IV.

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

And he shall inherit the kingdom; with this circumstance of superior glory, that, whereas David is now sleeping with his fathers, this exalted Prince *shall rule over the house of Jacob,* even all the true Israel of God, *for ever; and,* though the most potent monarchies of the earth will be successively dissolved, yet *of his kingdom there shall be no end,* even as long as the sun and moon endure. See Psal. lxxvii. 5, 17; Isa. ix. 7; Dan. vii. 14. Luke i. 33.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

And Mary replied to the angel, O thou heavenly messenger, permit me to ask, *How can this* possibly *be* from this time, as thou hast intimated to me, *since I am as yet a virgin?*[d] 34

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

And the angel, answering, said unto her, There is nothing in that objection, great as it may seem, for this whole affair is to be a scene of miracle: *the holy spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High* God *shall* thus *overshadow thee* by an amazing energy, to produce an effect hitherto, from the foundation of the earth, unknown: *and therefore that holy Offspring of thine shall,* with regard to this miraculous conception, as well as another and yet greater consideration, *be called the Son of God.* 35

36 And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.

And behold, to confirm thy faith in a declaration which might seem so incredible, I farther assure thee that *thy cousin Elizabeth also hath* by the miraculous power of God, *conceived a son,* though she be now *in her old age; and this is the sixth month* of pregnancy *with her who hath* long *been called barren,*[e] and spoken of as one who could have no hope of being a mother. And scruple not to believe what I have told thee, 36

d *How can this be,—since I am as yet a virgin?*] Some would render this, *What! shall this be if I have no intercourse with a man?* as if she would be resolved whether this birth were to be produced in a common or a miraculous manner. But I think it is more natural to suppose that she understood the former words as an intimation that the effect was immediately to take place, to which her present circumstance seemed, humanly speaking, an invincible objection. Our English version, *I know not a man,* is more literal than what is here given; but I do not apprehend that the strictest fidelity requires to render the Hebraism so exactly; the sense is evidently the same.

e *Who hath been called barren.*] I cannot think (with some learned and judicious persons) that *to be called,* and *to be,* signify entirely the same thing, so as that the former should be thought a mere pleonasm, and rendered just as the latter. The phrase seems to signify, in the language of scripture, not only that the thing shall really *be* what it is *called,* but also that it shall be *taken notice of* in that view: which I think will appear from an attentive consideration of the chief *texts* which have been produced to establish the opposite opinion. Compare Isa. i. 26; ix. 6; xxxv. 8; xlvii. 1, 5; lvi. 7; lxi. 3, 6; Mat. v. 9, 19; xxi. 13; Mark xi. 17; 1 John iii. 1.

SECT. IV. Luke I. 37

with regard to thyself as well as her; *for* thou well knowest, that *nothing* is, or ever *will be*, *impossible to God*, whose almighty power operates with equal ease in the most miraculous as in the most common productions.

37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

38 *And*, strange as the message was, *Mary* firmly believed it,[f] and *said*, with the most amiable humility and piety, *Behold* I am *the handmaid of the Lord*, and would approve myself faithful and obedient; *may it be unto me according to thy word!* I thankfully accept the honour, of which I confess I am unworthy; and humbly resign my reputation, and even my life,[g] to the divine care and providence, while I wait the accomplishment of thy prediction.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

Then the angel, having executed his commission, *departed from her*, and returned to his abode in the heavenly regions.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 26, 27

WITH what holy wonder and pleasure should we trace this notice of an *incarnate Redeemer?* and how thankfully should we adore his condescending goodness, that for us men, and for our salvation, he did not despise the womb of so obscure a *virgin?*

28

We are too ready in our thoughts, with *Gabriel*, to congratulate her on so distinguished an honour, and to say, as one did to *Christ*, in the days of his flesh, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee*, O Lord, *and the breasts which thou hast sucked!* (Luke xi. 27.) But let us remember there is yet a nobler *blessedness* than this attending those, in whose hearts he is so formed by divine grace, that they *hear his word, and do it.*

31, 32

Let us hear it, with joy, that he is *Jesus* the Saviour; but let us also consider that he is Christ the anointed Sovereign, who is to rule over God's people for ever. Remember, O my soul, that *of his kingdom there shall be no end;* and esteem it thine

[f] *Mary* firmly believed it.] It is worthy of our remark, that Mary, though a young virgin, should so readily believe an event, in itself so much more wonderful than that which Zacharias, though an aged priest, had found it so difficult to credit. And it may be observed, that the sacred writers are particularly careful to record instances of this kind, in which God doth, as it were, *out of the mouths of babes and sucklings perfect his praise.*

[g] Resign my reputation, and even my life.] For both these, humanly speaking, might have been in danger, considering the severity of the Mosaic law against those who had violated the faith of their espousals. (Compare Deut. xxii. 23, 24.) And though so impious a prince as Herod, who was then on the Jewish throne, undoubtedly controlled many of the laws of God, yet the natural severity and extravagant jealousy of his temper would probably engage him to execute this in its full terror.

unspeakable honour and happiness to be enrolled amongst his faithful subjects. SECT. IV.

The glories promised to such, in the future state, are so far beyond experience, or even imagination, that they might, to sense, appear as incredible as the message which Mary received: but let us remember the eternal truth of what Gabriel suggested to her, that *nothing is impossible to God.* He can therefore ripen our imperfect souls to all the improvement and pleasures of the heavenly state, as easily as he produces the meanest vegetable on the earth. Verse 33 37

Let the temper of the blessed *virgin*, on this great occasion, be therefore the beautiful model of ours: so, when the purposes of the Divine Love are declared to us, may we resign ourselves unto the Lord; and with such calm tranquillity, firm faith, and joyful acquiescence, may we wait the accomplishment of his gracious promise, and say, *Behold the servants of the Lord! be it unto us according to his word!* So do thou, O Lord, animate and support us! and the weakest of thy children shall not stumble at the greatest of thy promises *through unbelief*; but, *being strong in faith*, shall *give glory to God.* 38

SECT. V.

Mary visits Elizabeth; her faith is confirmed by it, and she breaks out into a song of praise. Luke I. 39—56.

LUKE I. 39.

AND Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste into a city of Judah,

LUKE I. 39.

IN those days, or soon after the time that she received the extraordinary message mentioned above, *Mary arose* from Nazareth, where she then was, *and went*[a] *with* all the *expedition* she conveniently could, *to* what was called *the hill-country*, which lay towards the south of Canaan; and came *into a city of Judah*, where Zacharias dwelt, with a comfortable expectation that this visit might tend both to confirm her faith and vindicate her character. *And* accordingly, she *entered into* 40 *the house of* her kinsman *Zacharias, and*, to the pleasing surprise of her friend, *saluted Elizabeth.*

SECT. V. Luke I. 39.

40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth.

[a] *Mary arose and went*, &c.] This was a very wise determination; as it was very probable that, by communicating the vision she had seen, and perhaps also describing the form in which the angel appeared, she might convince Zacharias and Elizabeth that there was something singular in her case, and so might bring in the reputation of such worthy and eminent persons to establish her own, in a circumstance which might otherwise expose her to great suspicion and censure.—I shall only add, that it is not improbable the city here spoken of might be Hebron; a city belonging to the priests in the tribe of Judah and the hill-country, Josh. xxi. 11.

SECT. V.

And it came to pass that as soon as Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant in her womb did, with a most unusual emotion, *leap* for joy, as sensible of the approach of Him whose forerunner he was appointed to be. *And Elizabeth was* directed to consider it in this view; for she was immediately *filled with* an extraordinary degree of divine inspiration, by
42 the influences of *the Holy Spirit*. And, far from envying the superior honour of her young cousin, she in very exalted language, congratulated her on the occasion; *and, crying out with a loud voice*, as in a sacred kind of transport, *she said*, in the very words which Gabriel had before used to the virgin,

Most *blessed art thou*, O Mary, *among all the women*, in the whole world; *and* most *blessed is the* sacred and miraculous *fruit of thy womb*.
43 *And* indeed, when I consider the matter attentively, I cannot but cry out, in amazement, *Whence is this* honour done *to me, that* she who is so highly honoured as to be *the mother of* that wonderful and divine child, whom I would with all humility own as *my Lord, should come unto me* as a guest under my roof; to whom I should rather have hastened to pay
44 my homage? And that he, of whom thou art now pregnant, is indeed my Lord the Messiah, I certainly know by what I have now felt; *for, behold, as soon as the* first *voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears*, as thou wast entering into the house, *the* very *infant* within me *leaped in my womb for joy*, with a vigour and sprightliness unknown before; which I am taught to interpret as a homage done to Him before whose face he is to go to prepare his way.
45 *And*, when I consider the whole affair in all its variety of circumstances, I have reason to say, *Happy is she that* so readily *believed*[b] what to sense appeared so utterly incredible, without so much as requiring any miraculous sign of it; *for* surely *there shall be* a very faithful and *an* exact *accomplishment of* all *those things which have been spoken to her from the Lord.*

Luke I. 41.

41 And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb: and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence *is* this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44 For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 And blessed *is* she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things, which were told her from the Lord.

[b] *Happy is she that believed*, &c.] I doubt not but here is an oblique reference to the unhappiness of Zacharias, who had not immediately believed the promise of God to him, and thereby had incurred so sensible a mark of the divine

SECT. V.

Luke I. 46.

46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

Then *Mary also* was filled with a transport of holy joy; and under the direction of the same Spirit, as well as in many of those words which she had learnt from the sacred oracles, she, in the warmth of her devotion, *said*,[c] "*My* "very *soul doth* most affectionately *magnify*

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

"and extol *the Lord*, *And my spirit*, with all 47
"its most exalted powers, *rejoiceth in God* as
"*my Saviour*; who, I trust, is granting me my
"own share in that gospel which, by the ap-
"pearance of this his dear Son, he is sending

48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

"to so many others: *For* notwithstanding all 48
"the meanness of my circumstances, and the
"obscure condition in which I live, yet *he hath*
"*looked* with a distinguishing regard, and most
"surprising condescension, *upon the low estate*
"*of his handmaid: for, behold*, he hath con-
"ferred such an honour upon me, that I am
"fully persuaded, according to his word by
"the angel, that not only the present age, but
"*all future generations, shall call me happy*,[d]
"and shall admire the peculiar grace and fa-

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things, and holy *is* his name.

"vour that the Lord hath shewn me. *For he* 49
"*who is powerful* beyond all our conceptions,
"even the Almighty God, to whom this
"strange event is not only possible, but easy,
"*hath done* these *great* and unheard-of *things*
"*for me; and his name*, and nature [*is*] so
"*holy*, that I cannot suspect the accomplish-
"ment of any thing that he hath promised.

50 And his mercy *is* on them that fear him, from generation to generation.

"*His mercy also* hath in every age been the 50
"hope and confidence of his people; and I
"well know that it [*is*] *from generation to*
"*generation on them that fear him. He hath*

displeasure. I have gently touched upon it in the paraphrase; but I was cautious of being too express, lest I should violate that great decorum, which the spirit of God, as well as the rules of modesty and piety, taught her to observe, when the faults of a husband were in question.—It may be added, that these words shewed her knowledge of Mary's immediate belief of the promise made to her: a knowledge which she could only gain by divine revelation, and which, therefore, would be a mutual confirmation of the faith of both.

[c] *Mary also said.*] It is observable that most of these phrases are borrowed from the Old Testament, with which the pious virgin seems to have been very conversant; especially from the Song of Hannah, in which there were so many passages remarkably suitable to her own case. Compare 1 Sam. ii. 1—10; Gen. xxx. 13; Psalm ciii. 17; xcviii. 1; lxxxix. 10; cvii. 9. and Mic. vii. 20.

[d] *Shall call me happy, μακαριουσι.*] I think there are several other texts where *μακαριος* should rather be rendered *happy* than *blessed*, which is the proper signification of *ευλογητος*: (See 1 Tim. i. 11; vi. 15; and Rev. xx. 6.) yet I cannot say that the distinction is always material, nor do I always observe it in the following *version*.

SECT. V. Luke I. 51

often *wrought* the most glorious displays of *strength by his* irresistible *arm: he hath* often *dispersed the haughty* sinners that exalt themselves against him, and confounded them *in* those schemes which were *the* most laboured *imagination of their* own *hearts.*[e] *He hath* often *brought down mighty potentates from their thrones* of dignity and power, *and,* by some singular interposition of his providence, *hath exalted the lowly* from their obscurest state, as he is now doing with respect to me. *He hath* often *filled the hungry with* a variety of *good things, and hath sent away the rich* and luxurious sinner *empty;*[f] having stripped him of all his plenty, and turned him out of all those possessions in which he was once so confident. And as a glorious instance of his condescension and his power, though our condition be so low in comparison of what it once was, *he hath* now *succoured Israel,*[g] and taken him as *his child* into paternal protection: and all this he hath graciously done *in remembrance of his everlasting mercy.*[h] *Even as he* long ago *spoke to our fathers,* and promised it *to Abraham and to his seed,* throughout all generations: and we the heirs of those pro-

51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree:

53 He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of *his* mercy,

55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.

[e] *He hath dispersed the haughty,* &c. διεσκορπισεν υπερηφανους διανοια καρδιας αυτων.] I know this may be rendered, *He hath scattered those that prided themselves in the imagination,* or thought, *of their hearts:* but I apprehended the words would well bear the yet more emphatical sense I have here given them. And thus they are peculiarly applicable to the gospel; in which God doth not only *cast down imaginations and every high thing,* &c. (2 Cor. x. 5.) by the humbling scheme of his recovering grace, but hath remarkably confounded his most insolent enemies, in their own most elaborate projects, and established his sacred cause by the violent attempts they have made to suppress it. (Compare Psal. ii. 1—3.) A triumph of divine wisdom, of which succeeding ages furnish out memorable and frequent instances at home and abroad.

[f] *Sent away the rich empty.*] Εξαπεστειλε strictly signifies, *hath sent, or turned them out of doors;* and very beautifully represents God as the great proprietor of all, and the greatest of men as his tenants at will, whom he can strip and turn out, whenever he pleases.

[g] *He hath succoured Israel.*] That the word αντιλαβετο properly signifies to interpose in favour of a person in great necessity, or extreme danger, Elsner hath abundantly proved, *Observ.* Vol I. page 175.

[h] *In remembrance of his everlasting mercy.*] The beginning of the 55th verse should, I think, be included in a parenthesis. It makes an easier and stronger sense to suppose that this *remembrance of his mercy for ever* refers to his everlasting mercies promised to the patriarchs. Compare Gen. xvii. 19; Isa. lv. 3: Rom. xi. 29. Yet I acknowledge those blessings might be said to be promised *to them, and their seed for ever,* which were entailed on their remotest generations. (Compare Gen. xii. 15; xviii. 8; &c.) Care is therefore taken to express both in the paraphrase.

"mises shall now behold them happily fulfilled SECT.
"in all the fulness of their extent and glory." V.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

Then Mary abode with her cousin Elizabeth *about three months* till very near the time of her delivery; *and* then *returned to her own house*, and lived privately there; concealing, but not forgetting, these extraordinary things which had so powerful a tendency to establish and animate her mind.[1] Luke i. 56.

IMPROVEMENT.

How natural is it for those, who have themselves received mercy of the Lord, to communicate their joy to others, and to seek the society of their *fellow saints*, whom he hath honoured with the signal manifestations of his favour!—Happy are they, whose friendship is confirmed and heightened by such endearing ties! And thrice happy the humble and generous souls who can thus, like *Elizabeth*, lose the thoughts of private honour and interest in a cordial concern for the glory of God and the good of men; *rejoicing* to see others, perhaps in some respects their *inferiors*, raised to stations of service more distinguished than their own! Verse 40, 41, 42

If this pious matron thought herself so highly honoured in receiving *a visit* from *the mother* of our *infant Saviour*, how much more doth it become us to admire the condescension of our glorious *Lord*, that he will represent himself as graciously *knocking at the door* of our hearts, and ready not only to make us a transient *visit*, but to take up his stated abode with us? 43

May our faith, like that of the *blessed virgin*, delightfully rest on all the promises he makes, as firmly believing, that *there shall be an accomplishment of these things which are spoken!* And, while that accomplishment is delayed, may the pleasing expectation of it tune our voice to a *song of praise* like hers!—Let *our souls* also *magnify the Lord*, and *our spirits rejoice* in that *God* whom we hope, through grace, to be *our Saviour*; whose condescension hath *regarded* us in such low circumstances; and whose almighty power and everlasting love *have done* such *great things* for us.—He hath provided heavenly food, to satisfy our *hungry souls*; and hath raised us to *enjoy the mercies* which, in more obscure intimations only, he *promised to the* pious *patriarchs*.—*His mercy* is on all that *fear him*, through succeeding generations.—May such distinguished favours animate our hearts with those sentiments of devotion and 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 53, 54, 55, 50

[1] Animate her mind.] Many of the things which had passed in this journey, and especially that rapturous inspiration which she had herself experienced, and which till now was probably unknown to her, must elevate her thoughts to a very sublime pitch, and enkindle in her attentive reflecting mind high expectations and glorious hopes. See Luke ii. 19, 51. and compare note [b], page 49.

SECT. V. zeal which they are so well qualified to excite! Otherwise the joy of the *Old Testament saints*, in the distant and imperfect prospect of these blessings, will testify against our insensibility in the superior advantages with which we are favoured.

SECT. VI.

The Birth and Circumcision of John the Baptist. Luke I. 57—66.

LUKE I. 57.

SECT. VI. Luke I. 57. *AND, when the full time for Elizabeth's delivery was come; she brought forth a son,* exactly according to the prediction of the angel to Zacharias. *And her neighbours, and* 58 *her relations,* were acquainted with it; and having *heard that the Lord,* in so illustrious and remarkable a manner, *had magnified* and displayed *his mercy to her,* they ran to testify their joy, *and* sincerely *congratulated her* on the happy occasion.

59 *And,* in particular, *it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came* together in some considerable numbers, *to circumcise the child,* according to the law (Gen. xvii. 12; Lev. xii. 3.): *and,* as it was then customary to give it a name,[a] *they* that were present would have *called him* 60 *Zacharias, after the name of his father: But his mother,* who had been more particularly informed by her husband of what had passed between him and the angel in the temple, *answered and said, Nay,* my friends, it must not be so; 61 *but he shall be called John. And* when *they* objected to this, and *said unto her, None of thy kindred,* either by birth or marriage, *is called* 62 *by this name:* In order to determine the question, *and* to be fully satisfied, *they made signs to his father,* to know *what he would* 63 *have him called. And he,* by signs, *asked for a writing tablet;*[b] *and* when he had received it,

LUKE I. 57.

NOW Elizabeth's full time came, that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

60 And his mother answered and said, Not *so;* but he shall be called John.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called;

63 And he asked

[a] As it was then customary to give it a name.] The giving the child its *name* was no more a part of the original intent of *circumcision* than of *baptism*; it was an incidental circumstance which custom had added. And I cannot forbear saying that, in administering the Christian ordinance, I think care should be taken to order the voice so, that it may plainly appear we only then speak to the child by the *name* which hath been already given it.—That the *father* among the ancients used to name the children, and that it was customary often to give them the *name* of their immediate ancestors, Elsner has shewn on this text.

[b] *A writing tablet,* πινακίδιον.] We have so few diminutives in our language,

for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue *loosed:* and he spake, and praised God.

he *wrote, saying, His name is John;* thereby declaring it a settled point, that would admit of no farther debate. *And they were all amazed* at the determination. But greater still was their astonishment, to find his tongue at liberty, *and* his speech restored; for *his mouth was immediately opened, and his tongue* [*loosed*]; *and he spake* audibly and distinctly; beginning, as it was most reasonable, with *praising God*[c] in that sublime hymn which we shall presently record.

SECT. VI.

Luke I. 63.

64

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judea.

66 And all they that had heard *them,* laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be? And the hand of the Lord was with him.

And a religious awful kind of *dread fell,* not only on those that were present, but *on all that dwelt near them: and all these things,* in a very particular detail of circumstances, *were published,* and became the great topic of conversation *over the whole hill-country of Judea.* *And all* wise and pious persons *that heard* [*them*] *laid them up* carefully *in their hearts,* as matters highly worthy their future consideration, *saying, What kind of a child will this be,* who is ushered into the world in so extraordinary a way? *And* their expectations were further raised by observing, that, as he grew up, *the hand of the Lord was* signally *with him;* and, through the divine blessing, he appeared not only a healthful and thriving, but likewise, on other and higher accounts, a very hopeful child.

65

66

IMPROVEMENT.

So sure are the promises of God, and so certainly will the *full accomplishment* of them another day shame our suspicious unbelieving hearts, and awaken the tongues of his servants to *songs of praise!* Happy the souls who, by a lively faith in them, are anticipating that blessed day, and whose minds, kept in tune by these pleasing views, are opening themselves to the most tender sympathy with others, and, like the *kindred* of this pious pair, are making the religious joys of others their own; so sharing rather than envying the superior favours bestowed upon them!

Verse 57

58

that I was not willing to lose this, which much more exactly answers the original than *table.*

[c] *And his tongue* [*loosed*]; *and he spake, praising God.*] I entirely agree with the learned Raphelius, (*Annot. ex Herod.* pages 219, 220) that Elsner's criticism (*Observ.* Vol. I. page 178, 179.) is not to be admitted, which would render it, *And his tongue also spake, praising God.* It would then have been ευλογουσα, instead of ευλογων; and Raphelius has given unanswerable instances, in the most approved writers, of a *verb* joined with *two nouns,* when in strict propriety it can only belong to one of them. Compare I Cor. iii. 2; where the original is, Γαλα υμας εποτισα, και ου βρωμα. *I have given you milk to drink, and not meat.*

SECT. VI. Verse 65, 66

Let us learn, with them, wisely *to observe* what God is doing around us, and *to lay up* remarkable occurrences *in our hearts:* that, by comparing one step of divine conduct with another, we may the better *understand the loving kindness of the Lord,* and be engaged to act with more regular obedience in a holy subserviency to his gracious purposes.

When, like good *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth,* we have the pleasure to see our infant offspring growing up in safety and cheerfulness, with healthy constitutions of body, and towardly dispositions of mind too, let us ascribe it to *the hand of the Lord,* which is *upon them for good.* Let us remember, that we are at best but the instruments of the divine care and favour to them; and that our families would soon become scenes of desolation, did not God watch over them in a thousand circumstances of danger and distress, which no prudence of ours could have foreseen, and which no care of ours could have been able to provide against.

SECT. VII.

Zacharias, on the birth of his son, breaks out into a sublime anthem of praise. Luke I. 67, *to the end.*

LUKE I. 67.

SECT. VII. Luke I. 67.

NOW John being born, as we have before described it, *Zacharias his father,* when he first spake after the birth of this extraordinary child, *was filled with* the influences of *the Holy Spirit; and,* in an exalted strain of sacred rapture, he *prophesied, saying,*

68 " *Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel, be-*
" *cause* he hath now owned the relation in so
" signal a manner; for *he hath graciously look-*
" *ed* down *upon his people* in their distress, *and*
" *wrought out* an illustrious and complete *re-*
69 " *demption* for them: *And* he *hath raised up*
" *for us a horn of salvation,*[a] even an honour-
" able and powerful Saviour, who is already
" conceived, and will quickly be born, accord-
" ing to our long expectation, *in the family of*
70 " *his servant David: As he hath spoken*
" by the inspiration of his Spirit, and given

LUKE I. 67.

AND his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people.

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

70 As he spake by

[a] *A horn of salvation.*] As *a horn* is often used, for the most obvious reasons, to express *strength* and *dignity,* it being the ornament and defence of the creature that wears it; so it is sometimes used in the Old Testament with a peculiar reference to the Messiah. Compare Psalm cxxxii. 17; lxxxix. 24; 1 Sam. ii. 10; and 2 Sam. xxii. 3.

SECT. VII.

Luke 1.71.

the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began;

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us:

72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant:

73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham;

74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

" frequent intimations to us *by the mouth of* " *his holy prophets, which have been from the* " *beginning of time.*[b] It now appears, that " none of those predictions are forgotten by " him, since he is preparing for us such a glo- " rious deliverance, *that we may* thus *obtain* " *salvation from* the power of the most formid- " able of *our enemies, and* may at length be " rescued, by his redeeming grace, *from the* " *hand of all that hate us:*[c] And this gracious 72 " messenger hath God now sent, *that he may* " faithfully *perform the mercy* which he [*pro-* " *mised*] *to our fathers,*[d] the blessed effects of " which extend also to them; *and* by him shall " God appear to *be mindful of his holy cove-* " *nant,* which hath passed through so many " various dispensations, yet still in the main " continues the same: It being indeed no other 73 " than *the oath which he* so solemnly *sware* " *unto Abraham*[e] *our father,* (Gen. xxii. 16, " 17.) According *to* the tenor of which he 74 " will now *grant us* the favour of an opportu- " nity, and a heart, *to serve him without fear,* " *being delivered out of the hands of our ene-* " *mies,* [*And to walk*] *before him,* under a re- 75 " ligious sense of his presence, *all the days of* " *our life, in* the paths of the strictest *holiness* " *and righteousness.*"[f]

[b] *From the beginning of time.*] It cannot certainly be inferred from hence, as some have argued, that there was *from the beginning of the world* a series of prophets, or that every individual prophet spoke of the Messiah; which can never be proved without doing great violence to the remaining writings of some amongst them. The words of Zacharias only amount to this, that the generality of prophecies, in all ages, refer to this great event. Compare Acts x. 43.

[c] Be rescued by his redeeming grace *from the hand of all that hate us.*] This seems to have been the mind of the Spirit, as appears by the whole tenor of scripture; but it is impossible to say, whether Zacharias fully understood his own words, which, it is certain, the older prophets, in some cases did not. See 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.

[d] *To perform the mercy* promised *to our fathers.*] Ποιησαι ελεος μετα των πατερων ημων most literally signifies *towards exercise mercy to our fathers;* and might perhaps intimate, that the mercy extended to the pious patriarchs was owing to Christ, who was afterwards to appear. Compare Rom. iii. 25. I cannot recollect any other place where ποιησαι ελεος is *to perform a promise.*

[e] *The oath which he sware unto Abraham.*] In vindication of our *version* from any objection which might arise to a learned reader from the construction of that *original,* μνησθηναι διαθηκης—ορκον ον ωμοσε κ. τ. λ. see *Bos, exercit.* p. 35. and *Elsner in loc.*

[f] And to walk *in holiness and righteousness.*] This, as well as deliverance from enemies, being spoken of as the merciful grant of God, I cannot but conclude, it refers to those passages in which God promised to pour out extraordinary degrees of a pious spirit on his people under the reign of the Messiah. Compare Is. xliv. 1—5; Jer. xxxi. 31—34; and Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27.

SECT. VII.

Luke I. 76.

Then turning to his new-born son, he added, "*And thou*, my dear *child*, *shalt* have the honour to *be* justly *called*, *The prophet of the Most High* God; an illustrious prophet indeed! *for thou* art he who, according to the prediction of Isaiah, (Isa. xl. 3.) *shalt go before the face of the Lord*, even of our Divine Messiah, to give notice of his approach, and 77 "*to prepare his ways*. It shall be thine honourable and delightful office, not merely to bring the tidings of some temporal deliverance, but *to give the knowledge of* eternal *salvation to his people*, *in* directing them how they are to obtain *the forgiveness of their sins*; Which, how great soever they have 78 "been, may now be obtained *Through the tender compassions of our God*,[g] whose bowels of mercy have yearned over his backsliding children; *by* virtue of *which* compassions, *the dawning of the* celestial *day*[h] *hath visited us* 79 "*from on high*: And the Sun of Righteousness is shortly arising, to spread sacred knowledge and joy over the regions of ignorance and misery, *to enlighten those that sit in darkness, and*, as it were, *in the* very *shadow of death*[i] itself, or in the most gloomy and dangerous condition, and *to direct our* wandering *feet into the way of peace* and felicity."

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord, to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercies of our God; whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us,

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Thus was John the Baptist ushered into the

[g] *Tender compassions of our God.*] Σπλαγχνα ελεους, his *bowels of mercy*: A strong *Hebraism*; which, though I have not literally retained it in my *version*, I have expressed in the *paraphrase*; and it is a method I shall often take in like cases. Compare Jer. xxxi. 18—20.

[h] *The dawning of the day.*] It is true that ανατολη may signify, as some here render it, *the rising sun*: and I doubt not but here is a reference to such texts as Mal. iv. 2; and Is. lx. 1—3; and, possibly, considering the known ambiguity of the *Hebrew* word ZEMACH, which also signifies *a branch*, there may be some allusion to Jer. xxiii. 5; and Zech. iii. 8. But it is strange that any should have thought *Zacharias*, a *Jewish* priest, hath here referred to the *Greek version* of those texts. It is well known, the word properly signifies that part of the heavens where the light begins to arise, and the first shining of that light. Compare Rev. vii. 2. *The dawning of the day* seemed therefore a very literal version; and, I apprehend, it more beautifully describes the state of things just at this interval, than if the sun had been represented as actually risen.

[i] *The shadow of death.*] Such phrases as these do, with peculiar propriety, describe the ignorant and miserable state of the *Gentile* world, and perhaps this former part of the *verse* may refer to them; but, as Christ's preaching to the *Jews* in *Galilee* (for it was only to the *Jews* he applied, Matt. xv. 24; x. 5, 6; and Rom. xv. 8.) is said, Mat. iv. 14—16, to be an accomplishment of Isa. ix. 1, 2; to which *Zacharias* here probably refers, I was not willing in the *paraphrase* to fix it to the *Gentiles*. The sad character and circumstances of the *Jews* at this time, as described by Josephus, too well suit the representation here made.

SECT. VII.

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

world, and thus were his infant days graced with wonders. *And the child grew up and became strong in spirit,* giving early tokens both of an heroic genius and a pious disposition, through the work of God's Spirit upon him. Compare Judg. xiii. 24, 25. *And,* his pious parents dying while he *was* young, or being peculiarly directed by a divine revelation in this affair, he did not appear in the service of the temple, even when he came to the age *in* which the priests began their ministrations; but by divine dispensation and direction, was led to retire into *desert places,* and to continue there *till the day of his being* publicly *manifested to Israel,* and, as it were, inaugurated among them under his prophetic character; for which the austerity and devotion of this solitude was a happy preparation.[k] Luke I. 80.

IMPROVEMENT.

WITH what sacred joy should we join in this *hymn of praise!* The blessings celebrated in it were not peculiar to the family of *Zacharias,* or to the house of *Israel;* but we, through the Divine Goodness, have our share in them: *The Lord God of Israel hath visited and redeemed* us. He hath *remembered his covenant* with the pious *patriarchs* in favour of millions who are *their seed* only as *heirs of the faith of Abraham.*——To us hath he accomplished the words he had *spoken by his holy prophets,* and *through his tender mercies* hath caused the *Sun of Righteousness* to arise upon us; upon *us,* who were once indeed *sitting in darkness, and in the shadow of death;* and whose ancestors, for many succeeding generations, were lost in ignorance, idolatry, and wickedness. Let us bless the Lord, who hath *given* us *light;* and make it our daily prayer that it may be the happy means of *guiding our feet into the way of peace.* ——Let us, with pleasure and thankfulness, receive the *knowledge of salvation by the remission of our sins,* without which we shall never see it but at an unapproachable distance. Verse 67 68 72,73 70,78 79 77

Let us repose our cheerful confidence in this Almighty Saviour, this *Horn of Salvation,* which God's own right hand hath 69

[k] This solitude was a happy preparation.] It may further be observed that such a *retirement* also contributed to his acceptance, by raising a character for eminent mortification and sanctity; inured him to the oppositions he was to expect in his work; and naturally prevented any such intimacy with Christ, in their child-hood and youth, as might possibly have occasioned some suspicion as to the impartiality of the testimony which John afterwards bore to him. Compare John i. 31.——Elsner hath shewn, as Schmidius had before observed, that the word ἀναδειξις often signifies the *inauguration* of a public officer. *Observ.* Vol. I. p. 185.

SECT. VII. *raised up for us:* through him let us seek the pardon of our sins and *deliverance* from all the *enemies* of our souls. And let a grateful sense of his redeeming love engage us resolutely Verse 74, 75 to walk in the strictest *holiness and righteousness,* as in the presence of God, and carefully to maintain *before him* a conscience void of offence *all the days of our lives.*

80 May we carry this temper along with us into solitude and retirement: may it animate us in the busiest scenes of life; and, in every particular instance, may it determine us in our choice of either, and regulate our conduct in both.

SECT. VIII.

Joseph's suspicions concerning Mary removed by the appearance of an angel to him. Mat. I. 18, *to the end.*

MAT. I. 18.

SECT. VIII. AND *now,* having given an account of *the birth* of John, afterwards surnamed the Baptist, we proceed to that *of JESUS CHRIST,* Mat. I. 18. the great subject of our history, which was attended with the most surprising circumstances, and *was thus* introduced. *His mother Mary being contracted to Joseph,* according to the method of the Jewish espousals, *before they came* to cohabit *together* as man and wife, *she was found* to be *with child;* and this pregnancy was, (as we have been informed above,) *by* the miraculous operation of *the Holy Spirit.*

19 *Now Joseph her husband, being a righteous man,*[a] perceiving there was something very extraordinary in the case, *and being by no means willing to expose her unto public infamy*[b] by any severe prosecution, nevertheless was so

MAT. I. 18.

NOW, the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example,

[a] *A righteous man.*] It is without any just reason that this text is often assigned as an instance where the word δικαιος is used to signify *merciful,* and some accordingly have here translated it *a good natured man.* If we consider the information which Joseph might have received from persons of such an extraordinary character as Zacharias and Elizabeth, (who would certainly think themselves obliged to interpose on such an occasion, and whose story so remarkably carried its own evidence along with it;) besides the intimation the prophecy of Isaiah gave, and the satisfaction he undoubtedly had, in the virtuous character of Mary herself, we must conclude, that he had acted a very severe and *unrighteous* part had he proceeded to extremities without serious deliberation; and that *putting her away privately* would, in these circumstances, have been the hardest measure which *justice* would have suffered him to take.

[b] *To expose her unto public infamy.*] It is very possible παραδειγματισαι may here refer to that exemplary punishment which the law inflicted on those who had violated the faith of their espousals before the marriage was completed: Deut. xxii. 23, 24; where it is expressly ordered, that *a betrothed virgin,* if she lay with another man, *should be stoned.* We may suppose, however, that the infamy of a *public divorce,* though she had not been *stoned,* may also be expressed by the same word.

was minded to put her away privily.

confounded with the concurrence of the strange circumstances that attended this affair, as that, in order to secure the honour of his own character, and to behave with all the tenderness that might be to a person that he loved, he *purposed* to himself *to have divorced her* as *privately* as the law of Moses would have allowed, that is, only in the presence of two witnesses, and without assigning any particular cause. SECT. VIII. Mat. I. 19.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

And as he was revolving these things in his mind during the night-season, full of the thoughts of what he was to do, he fell asleep; and, *behold, an angel of the Lord*[c] *appeared to him in a dream, and said* unto him, *Joseph, thou son of David,* (as being lineally descended from him) *fear not to take home Mary thy wife,* according to the espousals that have passed between you, though there may seem some danger of bringing a reflection on thyself and family; *for that which is begotten* and formed *in her, is* of no human original, but was produced by the miraculous and unexampled operation *of the Holy Spirit* himself. 20

21 And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.

And, in consequence of it, when her time is fulfilled, *she shall bring forth a Son; and thou,* under whose protection and care he shall be placed during his infancy, *shalt call his name Jesus,*[d] that is, God the Saviour; *for he shall* prove that glorious and divine person intended by God to *save his people,* even all that truly believe in him, both *from* the punishment and the dominion of *their sins,* by procuring an ample pardon for them, and raising them, after a life of holiness on earth, to a state of complete perfection and happiness. 21

But then there was besides, a *private* kind of *Divorce,* in which no reason was assigned, and the dowry was not forfeited, as in the former case; and by this she would not have been so defamed. See *Selden. Ux. Heb.* lib. iii. cap. xvi. p. 302, 365, 366. and *Lightfoot. Hor. Heb. in loc.*

[c] *An angel of the Lord.*] Probably Gabriel, who had been sent to Zacharias and Mary. That Joseph's scruple did not proceed, as some of the *fathers* supposed, merely from veneration, appears from the reason given why he should take Mary, which in that case would have been the only reason against it.

[d] *Call his name Jesus.*] Bishop Pearson seems to have set the etymology of this name in the clearest light, in his large discourse on it, (*Pearson on the Creed.* p. 69—71) in which he endeavours to prove, that JAH, one of the names of God, enters into the composition of the Hebrew name *Jehoshua,* to which *Jesus* answers. (Compare Heb. iv. 8; where, by the way, I think it should have been rendered *if Joshua had given them rest.*) This derivation most plainly shews, how Christ's being called *Jesus* was in effect an accomplishment of the prophecy that he should be called *Emmanuel.*

SECT. VIII.

Mat. I. 22.

Now all this was done, (that is, this miraculous conception, together with all the circumstances proper to attend it, was effected,) *that this* celebrated prophecy *might be accomplished*[c] *which the Lord had* so long before *spoken by the prophet* Isaiah, (Isa. vii. 14.) *who said* to the house of David in the reign of Ahaz, when it seemed in the utmost danger of being destroyed; "*Behold*, and attend to it with *a* becoming regard, while I assure you, that God will "accomplish a yet nobler work than what he "is ready to perform in your deliverance from "Pekah and the son of Tabeal; for an unsupported *virgin* descended many ages hence "from this royal family now to be rescued, "*shall* in a miraculous manner, *conceive and* "*bring forth a Son; and they shall call his* "*name Emmanuel;*" *which, being translated, signifies, God with us*, that is, God dwelling in our nature, on the most gracious and important design; a name in signification nearly equivalent to that of Jesus.

22 (Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

23 Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which, being interpreted, is, God with us.)

Then Joseph arising from his sleep, with entire satisfaction and humble acknowledgment, *did as the angel of the Lord had appointed him; and*, without any farther delay, *took home* Mary *his wife*. Nevertheless, in expectation of this wonderful event, *and* out of reverence to this sacred birth, *he knew her not* as a wife, though she dwelt under his roof: but she continued a pure virgin even *till she had brought forth her* divinely-begotten *Son*, who,

24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife;

25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her

[c] *That this* prophecy *might be accomplished.*] Few are strangers to the objections which have been made against applying this prophecy to Christ, which drove Grotius and many others, unhappily to suppose, that it immediately related to the birth of a child of Isaiah's in a natural way, and only in a secondary sense, referred to Christ. The controversy is too large for this place. I content myself with observing, that a son's being born of one *then a virgin*, when she was married, was no such miraculous event as to answer such a pompous introduction; and that it seems most reasonable to interpret Isa. vii. 16. as referring to *Shearjashub*, whom Isaiah was ordered to take in his hand (ver. 3.) for no other imaginable reason but that something remarkable was to be said of him. So that the general sense, in short, is this: "You have affronted God by "refusing a *sign* now; yet his transcendant mercy will make your present "forfeited deliverance, (by the death of "these confederate kings, which shall "happen before [HANAHAR] *this child* in "my hand is grown up to the exercise "of reason) *a sign* of a much nobler de"liverance by the *Messiah*, who shall "be born of an immaculate *virgin*, and "condescend to pass through the ten"der scenes of infancy as other children "do." Compare Isa. vii. 10—16. And see *Bishop Chandler*'s excellent remarks on this text, in his *Defence of Christianity*, page 325—331; *Mr. Green*'s 4th Letter to *Mr. Collins*; and *Usher*'s *Annals*, A. M. 3262.

first-born Son; and he called his name Jesus.

on account of his distinguished glories, with peculiar propriety might be called *the first-born*:[f] *And*, according to the direction of the angel, *he called his name Jesus*. But several other circumstances, relating to this important event, will afterwards be recounted. SECT. VIII. Mat. i. 25.

IMPROVEMENT.

WE see here, in *Joseph*, an excellent pattern of gentleness and prudence. In an affair which appeared dubious, he chose, as we should always do, rather to err on the favourable, than on the severe extreme. He was careful to avoid any precipitate steps; and, in the moments of deliberation, God interposed to guide and determine his resolves. Verse 19 20

With what wonder and pleasure did he receive these glad tidings! With what pleasure should we also receive them! For we too are informed of *Jesus* who came *to save his people from their sins*. An important and glorious salvation indeed! *Hosannah* to him that *cometh in the name of the Lord!* Blessed *Jesus!* answer thy character in delivering us, not only from sin's condemning, but from its reigning power! 21

Let our souls bow to *Emmanuel*, our incarnate God: and, while with holy wonder we survey the various scenes of his humiliation, let us remember too his native dignity and his divine glory. By him God hath fulfilled his ancient promises, in the most ample and glorious manner, *in the fulness of time sending forth his Son, made of a woman*, and sprung like *a tender shoot* from the decayed stock of *David* his servant. 22

While we study the oracles of the *Old Testament*, let us with pleasure trace the notices of the great *Messiah* there, even of *Jesus*, to whom *all the prophets gave witness*. May *his name* be ever inscribed upon our hearts! In that *name* may we *lift* 23

[f] *Till she had brought forth her Son, the first-born.*] There seems to be some peculiar emphasis in the expression τον υιον αυτης τον πρωτοτοκον, which justifies the turn I have given to the words. Compare Luke ii. 7; (where the very same words are used with a remarkable exactness); Rom. viii. 29; Col. i. 15; and Heb. i. 6.—Though I confess the force of the learned and candid Dr. Daniel Scott's remarks on this *note* to be such, as to convince me that this expression might have been used with regard to the *first-born son* of any family, and, consequently, that no certain argument of Christ's superior dignity and glory can be drawn from it, yet, from the pen of one so deeply impressed with the thought of it as Luke as well as Matthew was, I think it may probably contain some reference to it.—On what terms Joseph and Mary afterwards lived, is of so little importance to us, that I cannot but wonder it should have been the subject of so much debate. It is sufficient for us to know, that she was a *virgin*, not only at the time of Christ's conception, but at his birth, as the prophecy foretold she should be. *The evangelist* therefore, wisely contented himself with recording this, without affirming any thing farther either way on this delicate subject: I say *either way*, for that the manner of expression here used, will not certainly prove that Mary had more children afterwards, appears from comparing Gen. xxvii. 15; 1 Sam. xv. 33; Job xxvii. 5; Psal. cx. 1; cxii. 8; and Mat. xii. 29.

up our banners, and judge those reproaches a glory which we may meet with in his sacred cause![g]

SECT. IX.

The genealogy of Christ from Abraham, as recorded by Matthew; and from Adam, as recorded by Luke. Matt. I. 1—17. Luke III. 23, *to the end.*

MAT. I. 1.

SECT. IX. Mat. I. 1.

BEFORE we proceed to the birth of this Divine Infant, whose conception was so very remarkable, it will be proper to give some account of his descent according to the flesh. And we shall therefore introduce it with a table of *the genealogy of Jesus Christ*;[a] which is intended, not only as an introduction to his history, but more especially to shew that he was *the son of David*, and *the son of Abraham*, as it was often foretold the Messiah should be. (Compare Psal. cxxxii. 11; Isa. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; xxxiii. 15; and Gen. xii. 3; xxii. 18; xxvi. 4; xxviii. 14.)

MAT. I. 1. THE book of the generation of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2 Now it is well known, that *Abraham*, that renowned patriarch, and friend of God, from whom the whole Jewish nation had the honour to descend, *begat Isaac* in his old age, that son of Sarah, according to the promise, with whom God's covenant was established; *and Isaac begat Jacob*, on whom also it was entailed in preference to Esau, though his elder brother; *and Jacob begat Judah and his* eleven *brethren*, who became the heads of their respective tribes.

2 Abraham begat Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren.

3 *And* as Judah was the person to whom that extraordinary promise was made, that his descendants should continue a distinct tribe, with some form of government amongst them, till

3 And Judas begat

[g] In his sacred cause.] There was, humanly speaking, a probability that Joseph might have brought some suspicion on his character, or reflection on his family, by admitting Mary in these circumstances.

[a] *The genealogy of Jesus Christ.*] I am well aware that the word γενεσις, and the Hebrew TOLEDOTH, which corresponds to it, sometimes signifies the *history* of a person's *life* (as well as other things), and not merely his *genealogy*; (compare Gen. i. 9; xxxvii. 2; Judith xii. 18 Jam. i. 23; and iii. 6. Gr.) and that the learned Vitringa understands it so in this place: (See *Vitring. Observ. Sacr.* lib. i. dissert. i. page 39.) Yet, as it is much more frequently used in the latter sense, (see Gen. v. 1; x. 1; xi. 10—27; xxv. 12; xxxvi. 1—9; Num. i. 20, &c.; and Ruth iv. 18; in all which places it is applied to *genealogies*;) I think it best, with the learned Dr. Scott, to render it as above; only giving a little hint of the more extensive sense the word may possibly bear.

Phares and Zara of Thamar, and Phares begat Esrom, and Esrom begat Aram;

Shiloh, that is, the Messiah, came[b] (Gen. xlix. 10), and as it was from him that Christ descended, we shall confine ourselves to the line of his posterity. We therefore add, that *Judah begat Pharez, and* at the same time *Zara* his twin-brother, *of Thamar*, who had been his son's wife; *and Pharez begat Esrom, and Esrom begat Aram;* *And Aram begat Aminidab, and Aminidab begat Naasson*, who was prince of the tribe of Judah when the people were numbered and marshalled at mount Sinai, (Numb. i. 7; x. 14); *and Naasson begat Salmon.*

SECT. IX.

Mat. I. 3.

4 And Aram begat Aminidab, and Aminidab begat Naasson, and Naasson begat Salmon;

5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab, and Booz begat Obed of Ruth, and Obed begat Jesse;

And, after their settlement in Canaan, *Salmon begat Boaz of Rahab*,[c] who had been a native of that country, but entertained the spies at Jericho, and afterwards embracing the Jewish religion, had the honour to be thus incorporated with this noble family; *and Boaz* their son *begat Obed of Ruth*, the Moabitess,[d] who had so resolutely chosen to adhere to the God and people of Israel; *and Obed*, in a very advanced age, *begat Jesse*:[e] *And Jesse begat*, besides several elder children, *David, the* celebrated *king* of Israel, who was favoured with the title of "The man after God's own heart," and had an express promise that the Messiah should descend from him; (compare 2 Sam.

6 And Jesse begat David the king, and

[b] *Till Shiloh, that is, the Messiah, came.*] This sense of Jacob's prophecy is so beautifully illustrated and so strongly asserted by the learned Dr. Sherlock, bishop of London, in his *Discourses on Prophecy*, Dissert. 3. page 317, &c. that, if I was writing on this passage of the Old Testament, I should have little to do but to refer my reader to it.

[c] *Of Rahab.*] It is not indeed expressly said, she was Rahab of Jericho, commonly called *the harlot*; but I think there can be no room to doubt it, as we know she was contemporary with Salmon, and may conclude, that she (this Rahab) was, as all the other women mentioned in this list, a remarkable person. Now there was no other of that name, especially of this age, of whom the compiler of this *table* could, (so far as we can judge) suppose his reader to have any knowledge.

[d] *Boaz begat Obed of Ruth* the Moabitess.] The son of a *Moabite*, by an *Israelitish woman*, could never be allowed to *enter into the congregation of the Lord*; that is, at least he was rendered incapable of being a *prince in Israel*, and perhaps even of being *naturalised by circumcision*; which may be the meaning of the phrase, Deut. xxiii. 3. (See Mr. *Lowman's Hebrew Government*, p. 130. & *seq.*) But it evidently appears, from this celebrated instance, that *this precept* was not understood as excluding the descendants of an *Israelite* by a *Moabitish woman* from any hereditary honours and privileges; otherwise, surely, Salmon, the son of Naasson, prince of Judah, would never have married Rahab, one of the accursed people of Canaan; nor would the kinsman of Boaz have wanted a much better reason than he assigned, (Ruth iv. 6.) for refusing to marry Ruth when she became a widow.

[e] *Obed, in a very advanced age, begat Jesse.*] That Salmon, Boaz, and Obed, must each of them have been about an hundred years old at the birth of his son here recorded, hath been observed by many, and is well accounted for by Dr. Whitby in particular: Annot. on ver. 4.

SECT. IX. Mat. 1. 6.

vii. 12—16; and Acts ii. 30.) *And David the king begat Solomon of* Bathsheba, who had before been [*the wife*] *of Uriah* the Hittite: and though that holy man, in this unhappy affair, acted in a way most unworthy his character, yet God on his deep repentance, graciously forgave him, and entailed the promise on his seed by her.

David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias;

7 *And*, to go forward therefore with the genealogy according to this line, *Solomon begat Rehoboam*, from whose government the ten tribes revolted under Jeroboam the son of Nebat; *and Rehoboam begat Abijah; and Abijah begat Asa*, whose reign was so long and pros-
8 perous: *And Asa begat* the good *Jehoshaphat; and Jehoshaphat begat Jehoram*, who unhappily dishonoured the holy family by an alliance with Athaliah the daughter of Ahab, 2 Kings viii. 18.

7 And Solomon begat Roboam, and Roboam begat Abia, and Abia begat Asa;

8 And Asa begat Josaphat, and Josaphat begat Joram, and Joram begat Ozias;

And (to omit Ahaziah, the son of that wicked woman, whose impieties and cruelties rendered her so infamous, 2 Chron. xxiv. 7; the ungrateful Joash, her grandson, who murdered Zechariah the prophet, the son of his great benefactor Jehoida, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, 21, 22; and Amaziah, his son, who succeeded him) *Jehoram*, at the distance of the fourth generation, may be said to have *begat Uzziah* the
9 leper.[f] *And Uzziah begat Jotham; and Jotham begat* that wicked *Ahaz*, who, instead of being reformed by the chastising hand of God, trespassed yet more and more against him, 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. *and Ahaz begat* the religious *Hezekiah*, that distinguished favourite of hea-
10 ven: *And Hezekiah begat Manasseh*, so remarkable once for his enormous wickedness, and afterwards for his humble repentance; *and Manasseh begat* that infamous and hardened sinner, *Amon; and Amon begat Josiah*, that eminently pious prince, whose heart was so early and so tenderly impressed with an ap-

9 And Ozias begat Joatham, and Joatham begat Achaz, and Achaz begat Ezekias;

10 And Ezekias begat Manasses, and Manasses begat Amon, and Amon begat Josias;

[f] *Jehoram* may be said to have *begat Uzziah.*] It is undeniably evident, from 2 Chron. chap. xxii. *and following*, that three princes are here omitted. If this *table* was taken from any public records amongst the Jews, the Evangelist does not seem responsible for the exactness of it: but, if he himself drew it up, I think it will be but modest in us to suppose, that it was by some peculiar divine direction that the sin of Jehoram is thus animadverted upon, even to the *fourth generation*; his intermediate descendants being thus blotted out of the records of Christ's family, and overlooked as if they had never been.

11 And Josias begat Jeconiah and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

prehension of God's approaching judgments: *And Josiah begat Jehoiakim and his brethren*, Jehoahaz and Zedekiah, who both of them were kings of Judah, the former predecessor to Jehoiakim, and the latter the successor of his son:[g] *and, about the time of the Babylonish captivity, Jehoiakim begat* Jehoiachin, otherwise called *Jeconiah*,[h] who was so long the prisoner of the Chaldeans. SECT. IX. Mat. I. 11.

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias be-

12 *And, after the Babylonish captivity* commenced, this *Jeconiah begat Salathiel*;[i] *and Sa-*

[g] The successor of his son.] On the death of Josiah the people took Jehoahaz, otherwise called *Shallum*, though a younger brother, and made him king in his father's stead, (2 Kings xxiii. 30, 31); but Pharoah-Necho, in three months time, deposed him, and carried him captive to Egypt, according to the prediction of the prophet concerning him, (Jer. xxii. 10—12. compared with 2 Kings xxiii. 33, 34.) And having thus deposed him, he made Jehoiakim, the elder brother, who was formerly called *Eliakim*, king in his room. But this Jehoiakim was soon subdued by the king of Babylon, who, after his conquest, suffered him for a while to continue on the throne; but, on his revolt to the king of Egypt again, he was slain by the Chaldeans, (2 Kings xxiv. 1, 2,) and thrown out unburied, as Josephus tells us (*Antiq. lib.* x. *cap.* 6. [al. 8.] § 3. *Havercamp.*) agreeable to what the prophet had foretold, Jer. xxii. 18, 19; xxxvi. 30. After his death his son Jehoiachin, by some called *Jehoiakim the Second*, was put in his place; and this is he who is elsewhere called *Jeconiah*, 1 Chron. iii. 16; and *Coniah*, Jer. xxii. 24. But after a reign of three months, he was taken captive and imprisoned by Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings xxiv. 8—16; (according to the prophecy, Jer. xxii. 24, 25, 26) and after thirty-seven years released, 2 Kings xxv. 27. In the mean time, upon his being deposed, his uncle Zedekiah, the third son of Josiah, was raised to the throne; but, after a reign of eleven years, his eyes were put out, and he was carried captive to Babylon, Jerusalem and the temple being destroyed, 2 Kings xxiv. 17, 18; xxv. 7.—I have traced and stated the matter thus particularly, chiefly because it is a key not only to the *paraphrase* on this text, but to much of the book of Jeremiah, which, as it is plain that several *chapters* of it are displaced, cannot be well understood without a very exact knowledge of the preceding history.

[h] *Jehoiakim begat Jeconiah.*] I here follow the reading of the Bodleian and other *manuscripts*, (notice of which is taken in the margin of our Bibles,) Ιωσιας δε εγεννησε τον Ιωακειμ· Ιωακειμ δε εγεννησε τον Ιεχονιαν. And this indeed seems absolutely necessary, to keep up the number of *fourteen generations*; unless we suppose, that the Jeconiah here is a different person from that Jeconiah mentioned in the next verse, which seems a very unreasonable supposition, since it is certain, that throughout this whole *table*, each person is mentioned twice, first as the son of the preceding, and then as the father of the following.—I am obliged to the candid animadversion of Dr. Scott, for the small alteration I have made in my reading of this *verse*, from what was published in the first edition.

[i] *Jeconiah begat Salathiel.*] I cannot take upon me certainly to determine whether Salathiel was the son of Jeconiah by descent or adoption. It is certain, that Luke (chap. iii. 27.) derives Salathiel from David, by Nathan, and not by Solomon, whose line might possibly fail in Jeconiah. And this would be most evidently congruous to Jerem. xxii. 30; where it is said, that Jeconiah should be *written childless*, as we render it: But, as the dispersion of Jeconiah's seed is there threatened, and at least *seven sons* of his are reckoned up elsewhere, 1 Chron. iii. 17, 18, (supposing *Assir*, as the word signifies, to be only a kind of surname of *Jeconiah the captive*,) a greater number than one could suppose so unhappy a prince would adopt in his imprisonment, I should rather think the word translated *childless* in the fore-cited prophecy signifies, (as the *Seventy* suppose, who have translated it) ακαρπον, *naked, stripped*, or *rooted up*; and the more so, because it seems harsh to sup-

SECT. IX.

lathiel begat Zerubbabel,[k] that illustrious instrument of restoring and settling the Jewish commonwealth on their return from the captivity: Mat. 1. 13. *And Zerubbabel begat Abiud;*[l] *and Abiud begat* 14 *Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor: And Azor begat Zadok; and Zadok begat Achim;* 15 *and Achim begat Eliud: And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and* 16 *Matthan begat Jacob: And Jacob begat Joseph,* who was *the husband of Mary,* that blessed virgin, *of whom was born,* by the immediate power of God, *Jesus, who is* commonly *called Christ,* as he was indeed God's Messiah, or anointed One; the great Sovereign, and Prophet, and High Priest of his Church, completely furnished for the discharge of all those offices by a most plentiful effusion of the Spirit which was given, not by measure to him.

17 This is the genealogy of his reputed father,

gat Salathiel, and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;

13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud, and Abiud begat Eliakim, and Eliakim begat Azor;

14 And Azor begat Sadoc, and Sadoc begat Achim, and Achim begat Eliud;

15 And Eliud begat Eleazer, and Eleazer begat Matthan, and Matthan begat Jacob;

16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

17 So all the ge-

pose γεννᾶν should signify only *he adopted:* Yet I own it is something strange, that Salathiel, who on this supposition was a descendant of Solomon, should be adopted by Neri, a descendant of Nathan, a younger and much inferior branch of David's family; or that it should be said by Jeremiah that *none of Jeconiah's seed should rule any more in Judah,* if Zerubbabel, their first ruler after the captivity, was at farthest but his great-grandson. On the whole, I submit so difficult a question to the determination of abler judges, and content myself with thus hinting at what I found most material on either side. If the two *genealogies* do not speak of different persons that were named alike, I should conjecture that Salathiel, the son of Neri, might marry the daughter of Jeconiah, and might possibly, on that account, be also *adopted* by him. The attentive reader will see, that this hypothesis at least softens the difficulties inseparable from either of the former.

[k] *Salathiel begat Zerubbabel.*] This illustrious person, Zerubbabel, is so often said to have been the son of *Salathiel,* or *Shealtiel,* which is so nearly the same, (and accordingly the Syriac here reads *Schaltiel,*) see Ezra iii. 2, 8; v. 2; Hag. i. 1, 12, 14; ii. 23; that I incline more and more to think, with Brennius, that the Zerubbabel mentioned, 1 Chron. iii. 17—19, as the son of Pedaiah the brother of Salathiel, was a different person from this. As the name *Zerubbabel* signifies *a stranger in Babylon,* it is no wonder that it should be given to several children born in the captivity.—If this solution be not allowed, I see not how the known difficulty here can be removed, unless by acknowledging that the books of Chronicles (the author of which is unknown,) may have suffered by the injuries of time, so that the *present reading* of some passages may be incorrect; which is very consistent with owning the plenary *inspiration* of those books. By allowing this, we should fairly get rid of *two parts in three* of the seeming contradictions in the writings of the *Old Testament,* (I speak on an accurate review of them,) and should be free from the sad necessity of such *evasive criticisms,* as are more likely to pain a candid heart than to satisfy an attentive and penetrating mind. The omission of a word or two in a *genealogical table,* and sometimes the mistake of a letter or two in *transcribing,* especially with regard to names or numbers, occasions many inextricable difficulties, where, in the *original reading,* all might be perfectly clear.

[l] *Zerubbabel begat Abiud.*] Rhesa, mentioned by Luke, chap. iii. ver. 27, was probably another son of Zerubbabel. Abiud might possibly be the same with Meshullam, whose name is mentioned in 1 Chron. iii. 19; or perhaps he and his descendants falling into obscurity, their names might be no where preserved but

nerations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

so that we see, as it here stands, that *all the generations*, in the first interval or class of this illustrious family *from Abraham to David*, when we may look upon it as in its rising state, *are fourteen generations: and* after these, in the next class, *from David to the Babylonish captivity*, when it was seated on the throne, and may be reckoned as in its flourishing state, we may compute them as amounting to the same number; and, to consider them as they are represented here, they may again be counted *fourteen generations*:[m] *and*, in like manner, in the last class, *from the Babylonish captivity to Christ* when by degrees it sunk into obscurity, and manifestly was in its declining state, then also we may reckon them as *fourteen generations*. SECT. IX. Mat. I. 17.

LUKE III. 23.

And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age,

LUKE III. 23.

But, though we have thus given the legal genealogy of Christ, from Abraham, as derived from Joseph his reputed father, we shall yet add another that ascends to Adam; *and* this is the account which Luke hath given us in his gospel; where, after he had spoken of the baptism of *Jesus when* he was *beginning* [*his* public *ministry*,] and *was about thirty years of age*, he traces his descent in the line of Mary,[n] whose father Heli adopting Joseph, whom he made his son-in-law, the descent of Joseph Luke III. 23.

in this *genealogy* of Joseph's family, which the *evangelist* transcribed as he found it.

[m] They may be counted *fourteen generations*.] I express it with this latitude, as it is manifest that three persons are omitted in the *second class* between Jehoram and Uzziah, ver. 8; and it is only by counting them as here represented that they make *fourteen generations*. And if, according to the reading of the *Bodleian*, Jehoiakim be introduced in ver. 11, and considered as the last of this class, (which seems the better reading, as Jeconiah does not appear to have had any brethren,) Jeconiah will thus be reserved for the *third class*, which otherwise would want one person to complete the number.

[n] In the line of Mary.] I am aware that Mr. Le Clerc and many other learned men have thought that Joseph was begotten by Heli, and adopted by Jacob: but I much rather conclude, that he was adopted by Heli, or rather taken by him for his son upon the marriage of his daughter, and that Heli was the father of Mary; because an antient *Jewish Rabbi* expressly calls her the *daughter of Heli*; and chiefly, because else we have indeed no true *genealogy* of *Christ* at all, but only two different views of the line of Joseph his reputed father; which would by no means prove, that *Christ*, who was only by adoption his son, was of *the seed of Abraham* and of *the house of David*. Yet the apostle speaks of it as *evident*, that *Christ* was descended from Judah. Heb. vii. 14; in which, if this gospel were (as antiquity assures us,) written by the direction of Paul, perhaps he may refer to this very *table* before us. (See Mr. *Whiston's Harmony of the four Evangelists*, Prop. xvi. p. 175, *& seq.*)

SECT. IX. Luke III. 23.

may on that account be reckoned from him, and so is in effect the same with that of Mary. Christ therefore, *being* born of Mary after her espousals, may be considered, upon this account, to be (*as* at that time he commonly *was reckoned*) *the son of Joseph*, who, by adoption, or rather by the marriage of his daughter, was 24 the son *of Heli*,[o] The son *of Matthat*, the son *of Levi*, the son *of Melchi*, the son *of Jannah*, 25 the son *of Joseph*, The son *of Mattathias*, the son *of Amos*, the son *of Nahum*, the son *of* 26 *Eli*, the son *of Naggia*, The son *of Maath*, the son *of Matthias*, the son *of Shimei*, the son 27 *of Joseph*, the son *of Judah*, The son *of Johannah*, the son *of Rhesa*, the son *of Zerubba-* 28 *bel*, the son *of Salathiel*, the son *of Neri*,[p] The son *of Melchi*, the son *of Addi*, the son *of Cosam*, the son *of Elmodam*, the son *of Er*, 29 The son *of Joses*, the son *of Eliezer*, the son *of Jorim*, the son *of Matthat*, the son *of Levi*, 30 The son *of Simeon*, the son *of Judah*, the son *of Joseph*, the son *of Jonan*, the son *of Elia-* 31 *kim*, The son *of Meleah*, the son *of Mainon*, the son *of Mattathias*, the son *of Nathan*, the son *of* that celebrated king of Israel, *David*, the man 32 after God's own heart, The son *of Jesse*, the son *of Obed*, the son *of Boaz*, the son *of* 33 *Salmon*, the son *of Naasson*, The son *of Aminadab*, the son *of Aram*, the son *of Esrom*, 34 the son *of Pharez*, the son *of Judah*, The son *of Jacob*, the son *of Isaac*, who was, according to the promise, the son *of* that honourable patriarch *Abraham*, the son *of Terah*, the son 35 *of Nahor*, The son *of Serug*, the son *of* Ra-

which being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was *the son* of Heli, 24 Which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, which was *the son of* Melchi, which was *the son* of Janna, which was *the son* of Joseph, 25 Which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Amos, which was *the son* of Nahum, which was *the son* of Esli, which was *the son* of Nagge, 26 Which was *the son* of Maath, which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Simei, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Juda, 27 Which was *the son* of Joanna, which was *the son* of Rhesa, which was *the son* of Zorobabel, which was *the son* of Salathiel, which was *the son* of Neri, 28 Which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Addi, which was *the son* of Cosam, which was *the son* of Elmodam, which was *the son* of Er, 29 Which was *the son* of Jose, which was *the son* of Eliezer, which was *the son* of Jorim, which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, 30 Which was *the son* of Simeon, which was *the son* of Juda, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Jonan, which was *the son* of Eliakim, 31 Which was *the son* of Melea, which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of Mattatha, which was *the son* of Nathan, which was *the son* of David, 32 Which was *the son* of Jesse, which was *the son* of Obed, which was *the son* of Booz, which was *the son* of Salmon, which was *the son* of Naasson, 33 Which was *the son* of Aminadab, which was *the son* of Aram, which was *the son* of Esrom, which was *the son* of Phares, which was the son of Juda, 34 Which was *the son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was *the son* of Abraham, which was *the son* of Thara, which was *the son* of Nachor, 35 Which was *the son* of Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the son* of Phalec, which was *the son* of

[o] *Joseph*, who by adoption, or rather by the marriage of his daughter, was the son *of Heli*.] It is necessary to take the words in this latitude, because the true *father of Joseph* appears to have been Jacob or James, the son of Matthan. See Matt. i. 15, 16.

[p] The son *of Neri*.] See the latter end of note [i], page 69.

Heber, which was *the son* of Sala, 36 Which was *the son* of Cainan, which was *the son* of Arphaxad, which was *the son* of Sem, which was *the son* of Noe, which was *the son* of Lamech, 37 Which was *the son* of Mathusala, which was *the son* of Enoch, which was *the son* of Jared, which was *the son* of Maleleel, which was *the son* of Cainan, 38 Which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the son* of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam, which was *the son* of God.

gau, or *Reu*, the son *of Peleg*, the son *of Heber*, the son *of Salah*, The son *of Cainan*,[q] the son *of Arphaxad*, the son *of Shem*, the son *of Noah*, with whom he was preserved in the ark, and it was well known, that Noah was the son *of Lamech*, The son *of Methusaleh*, the son *of Enoch*, who was translated without dying, and was the son *of Jared*, the son *of Mahalaleel*, the son *of Cainan*, The son *of Enos*, the son *of Seth*, the son *of Adam*, who, being descended from no human parents, but formed by the immediate power of a Divine Creating Hand, might, with peculiar propriety, be called [*the son*] *of God*, in his original state the heir of immortality and glory.

SECT. IX. Luke III. 36. 37 38

IMPROVEMENT.

WHEN we survey any such series of generations, it is obvious to reflect how, *like the leaves of a tree, one passeth away and another cometh*; yet *the earth still abideth*, and with it the goodness of the Lord, which runs on, from generation to generation, the common hope of parents and children. Mat. I. 1. *& seq.*

Of those who formerly lived upon earth, and perhaps made the most conspicuous figure among the children of men, how many have there been whose names have perished with them! and how many of whom nothing but their *names* are remaining! Thus are *we* passing away, and thus shall we be shortly forgotten. Happy if, while we are forgotten of men, we are remembered by God, and our *names* are found *written in the book of* Mat. I. 18. *& seq.*

[q] The son *of Cainan.*] There is no mention made of this Cainan in either of the *genealogies* that Moses gives us, Gen. x. 24; and xi. 12.; but Salah is there said to be the son of Arphaxad. Cainan must therefore have been introduced here from the *translation* of the *seventy interpreters*, who have inserted him in both these places in the same order as we find him here; and, as this *translation* was then commonly used, and was more generally understood than the *Hebrew*, it is probable that some transcriber of this gospel added Cainan from that version, unless we suppose that Luke himself might choose, in writing this *genealogy*, to follow the *Septuagint*, as he appears to do in several other passages that he has quoted from the *Old Testament*. Nor is it, after all, a point of any consequence, as the design of the *Evangelist* was only to present us with the *genealogy of Christ* in its ascent to Adam, which is equally clear, whether we reckon Salah as the immediate descendant of Arphaxad, or whether we consider him as his grandson by Cainan.—And much less reason is there to object to the apparent difference there is between the *names* that Luke has given us, and those we meet with of the same persons in the *Old Testament*: This is no more than what is usual when the same names are mentioned in a different language; nor will the *Greek* admit them to be so expressed, as to agree exactly with the *Hebrew*. But, to avoid confusion, I have rather chosen, both in the former *genealogy* and this, to give the *names* that are delivered in the *Old Testament* as they are written in the *Hebrew*, to which our language will admit us to come nearer than the *Greek* could do, and which must be allowed to be the more exact and truer method of pronouncing them. Compare Gen. v. 3, *& seq.* xi. 10—27; and 1 Chron. i. 1—27.

SECT. IX. Luke III. 24. *& seq.*

life! There they will make a much brighter appearance than in the records of fame, or than they would do even in such a catalogue of those who were related to *Christ according to the flesh*; whose memory is here preserved, when that of many, who were once the wonder and terror of the mighty in the land of the living, is lost in perpetual oblivion.

Mat. i. 3. 5, 6.

We observe, among these ancestors of *Christ*, some that were *Heathens*, and others that, on different accounts, were of *infamous characters*; and perhaps it might be the design of Providence that we should learn from it, or at least should, on reading it, take occasion to reflect that persons of all nations, and even *the chief of sinners* amongst them, are encouraged to trust in him as their Saviour. *To him* therefore let us *look* even from *the ends of the earth*, yea from the depths of guilt and distress, and the consequence will be happy beyond all expression or conception.

Luke III. ult.

Adam, though originally *the Son of God*, lost that inheritance of life and glory, which, in consequence of such a relation, he might reasonably have expected: but the *second Adam* repairs the loss which we had sustained by the transgression of the *first*. We are now *predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ*, and raised by him to the hope of a fairer inheritance than the terrestrial Paradise. Let it be our daily labour to secure this invaluable blessing; that so, as we have *borne the image of the earthly Adam*, we may in due time *bear the image of the heavenly*, and at length attain to the perfect *manifestation of the sons of God*.

SECT. X.

Christ is born at Bethlehem, and his birth revealed by an angel to some shepherds in the neighbourhood of that town; and he is circumcised on the eighth day. Luke II. 1.—21.

LUKE II. 1.

SECT. X. Luke II. 1.

NOW it came to pass in those days, or about the time in which John the Baptist was born, and Christ conceived in the manner related above, *that* the Roman emperor, *Augustus Cæsar*, *published an edict*, or decree, *that all the land*[a] of Judea, which was then united un-

LUKE II. 1.

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from CæsarAugustus, that all the world should be taxed.

[a] *All the land.*] Though οικουμενη doth undoubtedly sometimes signify *the whole world*, (Acts xvii. 31; Rom. x. 18; and Heb. i. 6), and sometimes probably the *Roman empire* (as more especially in Rev. iii. 10; and xvi. 14); see *Elsner, in loc.* yet I think the learned and ingenious Dr. Lardner hath fully proved that it is to be taken in a more limited sense both here and Acts xi. 28, as it plainly is, Luke xxi. 26. (See *Lardn. Credib. of Gosp. Hist.* Part I. Vol. I. page 542; and Vol. II. p. 574, *& seq.*) It is with peculiar propriety called *the whole land*, as it was soon after dismembered; and Nazareth, where Christ's parents dwelt, was in a different division from Bethlehem, as Dr. Lardner well observes.—That απογραφη signifies a *public enrollment*, Elsner, on this text, hath evidently shewn.

SECT. X. Luke II. 1.

der one prince, and governed by Herod, *should be* publicly *enrolled;* or that the number of its inhabitants, both male and female, with their families and estates, should be registered. This he ordered, as a token of his particular displeasure against Herod their king, and as an intimation that he intended quickly to lay them under a tax. *And* here we may observe by the way, that *this was the first enrolment* of the Jews, and was committed to the care *of Cyrenius*, or, as the Latins write it, Quirinius, a Roman senator; who, being [*afterwards*] *governor of Syria*,[b] made a second enrolment or taxation, which was so famous in the Jewish history for the tumults that attended it. *And all* the inhabitants of Judea, were obliged to obey the edict, and *went each of them to his own* native *city*, or the place where his paternal inheritance lay,[c]

2 (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

[b] *And this was the first enrolment of Cyrenius*, afterwards *governor of Syria*, Αὕτη ἀπογραφὴ πρώτη ἐγένετο ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας Κυρηνίου.] The worthy person whom I mentioned above, Dr. Lardner, in his unequalled criticisms on this text, (Part I. Vol. II. page 718, & *seq.*) has given the reasons at large which determined me to prefer that literal version I have inserted. Our own is plainly mistaken, and is indeed hardly intelligible. The words might perhaps have been rendered, *This enrolment was before Cyrenius was governor of Syria*; which, to be sure, is a true assertion, and may perhaps, after all be vindicated; but I think the *original* expresses something more. Others have chosen to render it, *And the taxation* that was consequent upon this enrolment *was first executed when Cyrenius was governor of Syria*.—If none of the solutions proposed could be allowed, (as I think either of these justly may,) it would be a thousand times more reasonable to suppose a word omitted by some early transcriber, (perhaps πρὸ δεύτερα, after ἐγένετο,) than to think that so accurate a writer as Luke, were he to be considered only as a common historian, should make such a gross mistake as to confound this *enrolment*, in the reign of Herod, with that *taxation* which happened several years after, on the banishment of his son Archelaus. A fact of this kind was too obvious; and, I may add, too mortifying to the whole Jewish nation to be so soon forgot; not to say, that so strict a Pharisee as St. Paul, (who probably reviewed this gospel,) educated by Gamaliel, would be sure to remember it with some peculiar emotion.—Of the tumults that happened *in the days of the taxing*, which was afterwards made by Cyrenius, (when, on the banishment of Archelaus, Judea was reduced to the form of a province, and annexed to Syria under the government of Cyrenius,) in opposition to which, a disturbance was raised by Judas of Galilee, see Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xvii. in fin. lib. xviii. cap. 1. § 1. Bel. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 8. § 1. and Acts v. 37.

[c] Where his paternal inheritance lay.] Some have conjectured that Joseph might have a small estate here: but that is, at best, very uncertain; at least it is improbable that Jesus inherited it, (Mat. viii. 20.) or that his mother enjoyed it during her widowhood. See John xix. 26, 27.—It is true indeed, that had the original settlement of the divine law been duly regarded, *estates* in the land of promise would have been *unalienable*; and every male descended from Jacob, and not of the tribe of Levi, must have been born heir to a certain portion of land, allotted to some of his ancestors when the division was first made; on which, however, it might have been *mortgaged*: he must, if his father were dead, have entered at the next *jubilee* if he lived to see it. But things were now fallen into confusion. The small remains of the *ten tribes* who were brought back at all were, after their return from the captivity, incorporated together in the neighbourhood of Judea, while *stran-*

SECT. X. Luke II. 3.

to be enrolled: a circumstance wisely ordered by Providence, to verify the truth of ancient prophecies and introduce the promised Messiah; as, by their coming to be thus registered among the subjects of the Roman empire, the subjection of the Jews to the Romans very remarkably appeared.

4 *And* thus the parents of Christ were providentially brought to Bethlehem, the place where the Messiah was to be born, without leaving any room to suspect them of artifice and design: for, being thus obliged by the emperor's authority, *Joseph went up from Galilee*, even *out of the city of Nazareth*, where he then dwelt, *into* the land of *Judea*, most properly so called, *to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem*, which was the town where his ancestors had formerly been settled: *(for*, notwithstanding Joseph was reduced so low as to follow the trade of a carpenter, yet *he was* originally *of the family and* royal *household of David:)*[d]

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David.)

5 It was to Bethlehem therefore that he went up *to be enrolled;* and thither he took *with* him, by divine direction,[e] *Mary his espoused wife, who was* now *big with child*, and very near the time of her delivery.

5 To be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 But the town was so crowded on this occasion, that they were obliged to lodge in the stable of a public house, though in her present circumstances, it was so very inconvenient for her. *And so it was, that while they were there,*

6 And so it was, that while they were there, the days were

gers were in possession of large tracts of land once theirs; and the whole country of Samaria was in the hands of those whom the Jews looked upon *as the vilest kind of Gentiles*, that is, the *Samaritans*.—All that appears as to the circumstance now before us is, that every one was obliged to be *enrolled* at the place to which his family belonged; and the obedience of the Jews to this decree is a plain proof, that they were now dependent on the Romans, and *the sceptre* was *departing from Judah*. See Lightfoot's Harmony on Luke ii 1; and compare Gen. xlix. 10, and Numb. xxiv. 24.

[d] *Of the family and* royal *household of David.*] 'I have here rendered οἰκῶν *family, and* πατρία *household;* because I apprehend, with Grotius, that it may refer to the divisions of the tribes into *families* and *households*. Compare Numb. i. 18. & *seq.* and Josh. vii. 17, 18. In this sense of the words, after having told us that Joseph was *of the house of David*, it would have been very unnecessary to add, he was also *of his family;* but it was not at all improper to say, he was of his *family* and *household* too: for all the descendants of Eliab and his other brethren, if there were any such remaining, would have been of *David's family*, yet none of his *household*. If the word *lineage* only signified descendants, it would be exceeding proper to give Luke's sense; but, as I apprehend it includes collateral branches, I thought fit to change it.

[e] By divine direction.] One could hardly imagine he would otherwise have exposed her to the hazards of such a journey at so unseasonable a time; for, whatever the Emperor's commands were, such a case as Mary's must to be sure have been admitted as an excuse for her not complying with it.

accomplished that she should be delivered:

either waiting for the proper officer who was to register the people, or staying till their own turn came, *the days* of her pregnancy *were fulfilled*, and the time came *that she should be delivered.*

7 And she brought forth her first-born Son, and wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And she brought forth her Son, even him that justly bears the character of *the First-born*;[f] that glorious and excellent Person, who was the First-born of every creature, and the Heir of all things. *And* she no sooner was delivered, but immediately she *swathed him*; being so miraculously strengthened by God, in this hour of extremity, as to be able to perform that office herself;[g] *and*, having no other conveniency near, she *laid him in a manger* which belonged to one of the stalls there;[h] *because* (as we have just now said) *there was no room for them in* any of the chambers belonging to *the inn.*

8 And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night:

And there were some *shepherds in that country* who were then *lying out in the field and watching*, in their turns, *over their flocks by night*;[i] which it was necessary they should do, to guard against the wolves and other beasts of prey which were common there. *And, behold*, on a sudden, *an angel of the Lord came upon them*, and appeared in a visible form, standing in the air over their heads; *and* their eyes were immediately directed to it by *the glory of the Lord*, which *shone round about them* with such

9 And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

[f] *The First-born.*] See before the paraphrase and note[f] on Mat. i. 25. § 8. p. 35.

[g] Being so miraculously strengthened, &c.] I had, in the first edition, here and in many other places, inserted the word *probably* in the *paraphrase*: but, on the whole, considering that in all such performances the *author*, and not the *paraphrast*, is supposed to speak, I judge it more proper here to remind my reader (as I have elsewhere intimated,) that he is to take it for granted I do not pretend in this instance, and a great many others, to speak confidently; but that the *different character*, which distinguishes the divine *text* from my fallible, though upright attempts to illustrate it, must guide him in determining what is *certain*, and what only *probable*, and perhaps, after all, *very doubtful*.

[h] *A manger* which belonged to one of the stalls there.] Though Heinsius has learnedly proved that φατνη sometimes signifies *a stall*, yet it is certain, that more frequently it signifies *a manger*; and the *manger* was the most proper part of the *stall* in which the infant could be laid. If (as tradition says,) this *stable* was cut out of a rock, the coldness of it must, at least by night, have greatly added to its other inconveniences.

[i] *Watching* in their turns *over their flock by night.*] The *original* φυλασσοντες φυλακας της νυκτος, might more literally be rendered, *keeping the watches of the night*; which intimates their taking it *by turns* to watch, according to the usual divisions of the night. And as it is not probable, that they exposed their flocks to the coldness of winter-nights in that climate, where, as Dr. Shaw has shewn, they were so very unwholesome, (see Shaw's Travels, p. 379), it may be strongly argued, from this circumstance, that those who have fixed upon December for the birth of Christ, have been mistaken in the time of it.

SECT. X.

Luke II. 10.

incomparable lustre, as had in former ages been the usual symbol of the Divine Presence: *And they were exceedingly terrified* at so uncommon and so awful an appearance. *And*, while they stood in silent amazement, *the angel said unto them*, in the mildest and most condescending manner, *Be not affrighted*, O ye shepherds! *for* the design of my appearance to you hath nothing terrible in it; but, on the contrary, *behold*, and take the most thankful notice of it, *I bring you good news*, and greet you with the tidings *of great* and universal *joy*, *which shall be* now occasioned, not only to you, but *to all people* in the whole Jewish nation, yea, and to all the human race. *For this* very *day*, this welcome blessed day, *there is born unto you*,[k] and unto all nations, *a* Glorious *Saviour*, *who is* even *Christ the Lord*, that illustrious sovereign, whom you have so long been taught to expect, by the title, and under the character of the MESSIAH: He is even now born *in the* neighbouring *city of David* his royal father; and I call you to offer him your earliest homage.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people:

11 For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 Go, therefore, into the town without any farther delay, *and* inquire after him: for *this* [*shall be*] *a sign to you*, by which you will easily know him: *you will find* him *an infant in swaddling-bands*, *lying in a manger* belonging to one of the inns.

12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger.

13 *And immediately*, to confirm them in the belief of so strange a truth, as that this illustrious Prince should be born in such mean circumstances as he had now described, *there was* seen *with the angel* that spake to them, *a* great *multitude of the celestial army praising God*, *and saying*, in the most cheerful and harmonious accents, *Glory* be *to God in the highest* heavens, *and* let all the angelic legions resound his praises in the most exalted strains: for with the Redeemer's birth, *peace*, and all kind of happiness come down to dwell *on earth*; yea, the overflowings of divine *benevolence* and favour

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.

[k] *There is born unto you.*] That one of the Bodleian manuscripts reads it ημιν *to us*, is of very little weight, considering the consent of *copies* on the other side; and affords but a very slender support to Mr. Fleming's conjecture, that this was a glorified *human spirit*, perhaps that of Adam, all whose happy descendants might, he thinks, make up the chorus. (Fleming's Christology, Vol. I. p. 80.) I should rather imagine, with Grotius, that this angel was Gabriel.

SECT. X. Luke II. 14.

are now exercised *towards* sinful *men*! who, through this Saviour, become the objects of his complacential delight: Echo it back, O ye mortal abodes, to ours! "Glory to God in the "highest! on earth peace! benevolence and "favour unto men!"

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad

And it came to pass that as soon as the angels departed from them, and returned back *into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Come, let us go* immediately *to Bethlehem, and see this* great *thing which is done*, even this wonderful and important event *which the Lord hath* so graciously *made known unto us.* 15 *And*, accordingly, with one consent, *they came in haste*, before the night was over, leaving their flocks to the care of Providence; *and*, entering into the town, they followed the direction which the angel gave them, and quickly *found Mary and Joseph, and the* new-born *Infant* with them, just in the circumstance which had been described, *lying in a manger.* 16 *And, when they had viewed* this scene of wonders, and had attentively considered [*it*,] they humbly paid their 17

[1] *Glory to God in the highest; and peace on earth; benevolence* and favour *towards men.*] I am well aware of the ambiguity of these words. I do not mean as to the reading: For though the Alexandrian, and other manuscripts, instead of εὐδοκία, give it εὐδοκίας, as if the angels were proclaiming *peace* to *men of favour and good will*, or unto those who were the objects of the divine benevolence and complacency; (which is a *reading* that has been approved by many learned men, and in particular by Beza;) yet I think, the authority of that is overborne by the more general consent of the most ancient manuscripts, as well as by the versions of the oldest date, and the quotations of the *fathers* in the most early ages, which almost universally oppose it. (See Mill and Grotius on the place.) But, taking the original as it stands, Δοξα εν υψιστοις Θεω, και επι γης ειρηνη, εν ανθρωποις εὐδοκια, we must allow it to be capable of different *senses*.—Some chuse to render it, *Glory to God in the highest*, (that is, in heaven,) *and on earth; peace*, yea *favour towards men*: But then, I think, instead of εν υψιστοις, it rather would have een εν ουρανω; for so it is always usual to express, *in heaven and upon earth.* (Compare Mat. vi. 10; Luke xi. 2; 1 Cor. viii. 5; Eph. i. 10; *iii.* 15; Col. i. 16, 20; Rev. v. 3, 13.)—Others have given us the sense of it, that *the good-will*, or favour, which is now shewn *to men*, is *the glory of God in the highest, and* is *the peace* or happiness of those that dwell *on earth*: And this indeed is an important sense, and the *original* well enough will bear it. But thus to change the *doxology* into a kind of *proverb* or *aphorism*, seems to destroy much of its beauty.—I rather think, that they are all to be considered as the words of a rejoicing acclamation, and that they strongly represent the piety and benevolence of these heavenly spirits, and their affectionate good wishes for the prosperity of the Messiah's kingdom. (Compare Mat. xxi. 9; Mark xi. 10; and especially Luke xix. 38.) The new translation that has been lately published, where it is rendered, *to men on earth felicity in the divine favour*, does indeed express the sense of the two latter clauses, but by no means with equal ardour. The shouts of a multitude are generally broken into short sentences and are commonly *elliptic*; which is the only cause of the ambiguity here. As this beauty could not be preserved in a paraphrase, I have repeated the words, after they had been explained.

SECT. X. Luke II. 17.

dutiful respects unto their new-born Saviour; and having acquainted his parents with the marvellous vision they had seen, *they* immediately *published abroad* a full account of this remarkable occurrence, and gave a particular relation of the whole of *that which had been told them*, in so wonderful a way, *concerning this Child.*

the saying which was told them concerning this Child.

18 *And*, upon hearing this strange account, there was a general surprise; and, though they were prevented, by the meanness of his birth, from shewing a due regard to one that made no better an appearance, yet *all that heard* [*it*] *were astonished at those things which were related*

18 And all they that heard *it* wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 *to them by the shepherds* on this subject. *But Mary* in particular *treasured up all these things*, and carefully retained them in her memory; and, though she did not blaze them abroad among the populace, or make any vain boast of such extraordinary favours and testimonies, yet she attentively regarded all these wonderful events, *entering into the meaning* [*of them*] *in* the secret reflections of *her heart*,[m] and improving them all, as a further confirmation of what had been before revealed to her, and a foundation for the early acting of her faith and reverence towards her Divine Son.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

20 *And the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things which they had heard and seen* at Bethlehem,[n] so perfectly agreeable in every circumstance, to the account they had received but just before, *as it was told unto them* by the angel; admiring the mercy of God in sending such a Saviour, and his condescension in favouring them with such early discoveries of him.

20 And the shepherds returned glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

21 *And when eight days* from the birth of this Holy Infant *were fulfilled*, (that is, when the eighth day was come,) his pious parents failed not, according to the Mosaic law, under which they were placed, *to circumcise the child;* that so, though he had not any corruptions of nature to mortify, which was in part represented by

21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the

[m] *Entering into the meaning*, &c.] I apprehend Elsner has abundantly vindicated this sense of the word συμβαλλωσα, in his *note* on this place.

[n] *Which they had heard and seen* at Bethlehem.] Joseph and Mary would, no doubt, upon such an occasion, give them an account of those particulars, which the sacred historians have recounted above, relating to the conception of this Divine Infant; and this interview must greatly confirm and comfort the minds of all concerned.

Child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

that institution, he might nevertheless in a regular manner, be initiated into the Jewish Church, and thereby be engaged to the duties and intitled to the privileges of a son of Abraham, according to that covenant. And *his name was called JESUS*,° that is, the Divine Saviour; a name *by which the angel had called him before he was conceived in the womb* of his virgin mother. SECT. X. Luke II. 21.

IMPROVEMENT.

WITH what humble amazement should we contemplate this first appearance of our Incarnate Redeemer! Surely all the angels of heaven might justly have admired his condescension in assuming such a nature as ours, and wearing a mortal frame, though it had been attended with all the ornaments and splendours earth could have given it. Though, at his entrance into our low world, he had been born of an imperial family, placed under a canopy of velvet and gold, or laid to repose on pillows of down, all this had been deep abasement in the eyes of those who had beheld the glories of his celestial throne, and the honours paid him by *cherubims* and *seraphims:* But, behold, the Son of God, and the Heir of all things, is not merely in the abodes of *men*, but in a place destined for *beasts*, and, while *wrapped in swaddling-clothes*, is *laid in a manger*. Verse 6, 7

Yet, O blessed Jesus, how much more venerable was that *stable* and *manger*, when graced with thy sacred presence, than the most magnificent palace, or most shining throne of earthly princes! How ill doth it become thy disciples to *seek for themselves great things* in this life, or to be proud of its pomp and grandeur! Give us, O God, the simplicity of children, and make us willing to be *conformed* to the *birth* of thy Son as well as to *his death!* 12

Yet, mean as *his birth* might appear, his Heavenly Father did not leave him without witness. We see him, in this wonderful account that the *Evangelist* hath given us, surrounded with a brighter lustre than a court or a crown could have afforded. *Angelic legions* are employed as heralds to proclaim the new-born King. And to whom are they sent? To humble pious *shepherds*, diligently employed in the duties of their proper calling, and *watching by night* for the security of their flocks. Who would not gladly have shared in their poverty and fatigue, to have heard with them these *good tidings of great joy?* 9 11 8 10

° *His name was called Jesus.*] Grotius thinks, there might be an assembly of most of the remainders of David's family on this occasion; but surely, had there been many of them inhabitants of Bethlehem, their kinswoman would not, in such circumstances, have been reduced to the necessity of lodging in a stable.

SECT. X. Let us observe with what delight these courtiers of heaven undertook the happy embassy to these lowly mortals. Let us with pleasure attend to the *anthem* of these benevolent spirits. 13, 14. Far from envying the favour that was done us, they ascribe *glory to God* for it, and take their part in the joy they give. Let this love of the whole *heavenly host* to us, awaken our love to them, and our longing for that blessed world, where we and they shall surround our dearest Redeemer, not in such a form of abasement as that in which he here appeared, but clothed in that celestial lustre with which God hath rewarded the humiliations of *the manger* and *the cross*.

In the mean time, let our more intimate concern in this great salvation, engage us, more cordially to join with these blessed *an-* 14 *gels* in their *hallelujahs*; ascribing *glory to God in the highest* for this *peace on earth*, this *good-will towards men*, the great fountain of our present tranquillity and future hope! Above all, if Divine Grace hath conquered all the foolish prejudices of our hearts against *Christ*, and taught us with humble faith to apply 20 to him, let us, with the *shepherds*, *bless God for the things* which 17 have been shewn us, and make it our care to *spread abroad* the savour of his name, that others may join with us in paying their homage and their praises to him!

SECT. XI.

The purification of Mary and her offering in the temple; where Christ is presented to God, and has a very memorable testimony given him by Simeon and Anna. Luke II. 22—39.

LUKE II. 22.

SECT. XI. Luke II. 22. AND, after Mary had been thus delivered of her son at Bethlehem, *when the* forty *days* appointed *for her purification*,[a] *according to the* time limited by the *law of Moses*, (Lev. xii. 2, 4.) *were fulfilled*,[b] Jesus was taken by his pa-

LUKE II. 22. AND when the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished,

[a] *Her purification*; καθαρισμου αυτης.] The Alexandrian, and some other manuscripts, read αυτων; and, as it must be owned, that both *mother* and *child*, for a while after the birth were looked upon as ceremonially *unclean*, it might not be improper, (with Erasmus and some of the most considerable expositors,) to admit this reading, and to render it *their purification*, as referring to them both. For, notwithstanding it is true, that Christ had no mora impurity, from which he needed to be cleansed, yet we may well enough suppose him, as he *bore our sins*, to have submitted to this ordinance, as well as *circumcision*: and as he came into the world, *made of a woman, made under the law*, he would be ready to comply with any institution of the law, that he might thus *fulfil all righteousness*. But as *the law* that is referred to in this place, speaks only of the *woman*, and of the sacrifice that was appointed to be offered for *her purifying*, I have retained the common reading, and have made no alteration in the version.

[b] *The forty days—were fulfilled.*] Mr. Whiston has supposed in his Harmony, (prop. xiv. p. 138, *& seq.*) that these *forty days* were not accomplished till their return from Egypt: But although this may give the easiest solution to ver. 39,

they brought him to Jerusalem to present *him* to the Lord.

rents from the place where he was born, and, in obedience to the divine command, *they brought him to Jerusalem*, there *to present him* as a first-born son *before the Lord* in the temple; SECT. XI. Luke II. 22.

23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)

According as it is written in the law of the Lord (Exod. xiii. 2; Numb. viii. 16, 17.) *that* "*every* "*first-born male shall be called holy to the Lord*, "and shall be treated as devoted in a peculiar "manner to his service." Agreeably to this precept, they now went up to redeem him,[c] at the price of five shekels, which was the sum appointed to be paid for every eldest son, without any regard to the condition of the family (compare Numb. xviii. 15, 16.) 23

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.

And to offer a sacrifice, according to what is enjoined in the law of the Lord, Lev. xii. 6, 8; where they, whose circumstances were so mean as that they could not conveniently afford a lamb, are ordered to bring *a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons*; which offering suited best the virgin's 24

it crowds so many events into that little space, and so entirely depends on a precarious *hypothesis*, that *Christ was born about a month before the death of Herod*, (which I think Mr. Manne has entirely overthrown, in his Dissertation on the birth of Christ, p. 42—45.) that it seems evident upon the whole, that the purification preceded the *flight into Egypt*, as most Harmonizers have thought. But whether *the purification* was *before* or *after* the *visit* of the *wise men*, is not so plain: I have placed it *before*, chiefly that I might not interrupt the thread of the story; and partly because the meanness of the *virgin's* sacrifice makes it probable that she had not then received the *presents* that were offered by *the wise men*. Nevertheless, I acknowledge it very possible, that *the purification* might happen during the interval of Herod's waiting for the return of the *wise men*, and that the holy family might go from Jerusalem to Egypt the very night after Jesus had been presented in the temple; as Garthwait intimates in his excellent Harmony, (chap. xi. xii.) which is so accurately and judiciously composed, that as far as I can judge most of the faults in Le Clerc, Whiston, Wells, &c. may be corrected by it. It was first printed at Cambridge 1634, and is almost entirely the same with that which was afterwards published under the name of Mr. Locke's Life of Christ.—After all, I shall only observe, that this is one of the many instances in which the order of the sacred story cannot be circumstantially determined with demonstrative evidence.

[c] They went up to redeem him.] God having acquired a peculiar right to the *first-born of Israel*, by preserving them amidst the destruction brought on the *first-born* of the Egyptians, though he had accepted of the tribe of Levi as an equivalent, yet would have the memory of it preserved by this little acknowledgment of *five shekels* (or about *twelve shillings* and *sixpence* of our money), which was the price that every *first-born* child must be redeemed at: and in case of an omission here, it might reasonably have been expected that the child should be cut off by some judgment. The *first-born* therefore were *redeemed* by paying of this money, in such a sense as all the people were, when, at the time that they were *numbered*, each of them paid *half a shekel* as *a ransom for their souls, that there might be no plague among them*: as there might otherwise have been, if that acknowledgment of the Divine Goodness had been omitted: Exod. xxx. 12—16. But that the *five shekels* demanded for the *first-born* were paid to *redeem* them from being sacrificed on the altar, is one of the most false and malicious insinuations that ever came even from the most inveterate enemy of revelation.

SECT. XI.

rank in life, and she did not affect on this occasion to exceed it.

Luke II. 25.

And behold, there was then *at Jerusalem a* certain *man, whose name was Simeon*;[d] *and he* [*was*] one that was *a* singularly *righteous and religious person*, who was *waiting*, with many others at that time, *for* the coming of the Messiah, *the* great expected *consolation of Israel*;[e] *and the Holy Spirit* of prophecy *was* sometimes 26 in an extraordinary manner *upon him*: *And* among other things *it was* divinely *revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit, that he should not die*[f] *before he had seen the* Great *Anointed of the Lord*, and his eyes had beheld the promised Messiah.

27 *And he came under the* secret, but powerful *impulse of the Spirit, into the temple*, just at the juncture of time *when* [*his*] *parents brought in the child Jesus* into the court of Israel there, *that they might do for him according to the custom*, which the authority *of the* divine *law* had required and established in such cases. *And* 28 when the pious Simeon had discovered him by his prophetic gift, and saw that well-known prophecy accomplished, (Hag. ii. 7.) that the desire of all nations should come into that second temple, *he* was transported at the sight of this desirable Child, and *took him* with a sacred rapture *into his arms, and praised God, and said*, with the highest elevations of devotion 29 and joy, *Now, O*, my Sovereign *Lord* and Master, I thankfully acknowledge that *thou dismissest thy servant* to the repose of the grave *in peace*;[g] and I can die with pleasure, since thou

25 And behold, there was a man, in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace ac-

[d] *Whose name was Simeon.*] Had Simeon been, as some suppose, the president of the council, and father of the celebrated Gamaliel, St. Luke would probably have inserted so honourable a circumstance.

[e] *The consolation of Israel*] This is a phrase that frequently is used, both by the ancient and modern Jews, for a description of the Messiah. *The days of consolation* is a common phrase among them, to signify *the days of the Messiah*; nor is there any thing more usual with them, than to swear *by their desire of seeing this consolation*; as Dr. Lightfoot proves by several instances, Hor. Hebr. in loc. And it is easy to observe, that the same way of speaking was made use of by the *prophets*, who often introduced the promise of the Messiah's *coming*, to comfort the people of God in their afflictions. Compare Isa. xlix. 13; lii. 9; lxvi. 13; Jer. xxxi. 13; and Zech. i. 17.

[f] *That he should not die.*] Our translation, *that he should not see death*, is most literal; but I did not apprehend the antithesis, between *seeing death*, and *seeing Christ*, to be intended as at all material, and therefore did not retain the Hebraism.

[g] *Thou dismissest thy servant in peace.*] There may perhaps be an allusion here to the custom of saying, especially to an inferior, when parting, *Go in peace*. See note [l], on Luke vii. 50. sect. lx.

cording to thy word:
30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation.
31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;
32 A light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.
33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.
34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold this *Child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against:
35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also;)

SECT. XI.

Luke II. 30.

hast dealt with me *according to* the gracious engagements of *thy word* to me; *For mine eyes have* at length *beheld* him, whom thou hast appointed as the great instrument of *thy* long expected *salvation*; Even that salvation, *which thou hast prepared* to set *before the face of all people*, as the glorious object of their faith and hope; Ordaining him to be *a light for the illumination of the Gentiles*, to reveal the way of life to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, as well as giving him to be the consolation *and the glory of thy people Israel*, who have the honour of being peculiarly related to him. 30 31 32

And when they heard this glorious testimony given to the infant Jesus, *Joseph and his mother were astonished at those things which were spoken of him* by so eminent a prophet; which appeared to them so much the more remarkable, when compared with the miraculous circumstances which had attended his conception and birth. 33

And Simeon, in the warmth of his devotion, *blessed them* both, praying affectionately for them, that the favour of God might continually attend them; *and said to Mary his mother, Behold this* [*Child*] of thine *is appointed for* an occasion of *the fall and rising again of many in Israel*, as he in fact shall be the means of bringing aggravated ruin upon some by their rejecting him, as well as of procuring salvation and recovery to others on their believing in him; *and* his appearance in the world shall be such, as if he was intended and set up *for a mark of contradiction* and reproach,[h] to be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to many, while he shall be to others for a sanctuary. (Isa. viii. 14.) *Yea*, with such cruel malice and indignity shall he be treated, that the time will come, when *a dart shall* (as it were) *pierce through thine own soul*,[i] and wound thee 34 35

[h] *A mark of contradiction* and reproach.] The word σημειον seems here to be used for a *mark* or *butt* to shoot or dart at; which finely intimates the deliberate malice and hellish artifice with which the character and person of Christ was assaulted, while he *endured the contradiction of sinners against himself*, Heb. xii. 3.

[i] *A dart shall pierce thro' thine own soul.*] Though ῥομφαια seems often to signify *a sword*, as particularly, in Rev. i. 16; ii. 12, 16; vi. 8;) yet we are assured by Grotius, it properly signifies *a Thracian javelin*. It may perhaps, (as L'Enfant observes) be a beautiful allusion to the preceding figure, as if it had been told

SECT. XI.

in the most sensible manner, when thou art witness to those agonies which shall penetrate his. But these strange revolutions shall be permitted, and these mysterious scenes of Providence be opened, *that the* secret thoughts and *reasonings of many hearts may be disclosed*; or that the real characters of men may be discovered, and the sincerity of those who are approved may be made manifest; while the hypocrisy and earthly-mindedness of those, who intend only their own secular advantage, under the specious pretence of waiting for the Messiah's kingdom, shall be exposed; who will be soon offended at the obscure form of his appearance, and at the persecutions which shall attend him and his cause.

Luke II. 35.

that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

36 *And there was* also [*one*] *Anna a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel*, a person *of* some considerable note in *the tribe of Asher. She was* now *very far advanced in years, having lived* only *seven years with a husband from* the time 37 of *her virginity: And*, as her husband died while *she was* very young, she had now been *a widow about eighty-four years*;[k] *who*, whatever estate she might have in the country, *departed not from* Jerusalem, but kept always so near *the temple*, as to be able to resort thither at the hours of morning and evening sacrifice; *serving* [*God*] *with* frequent *fastings and prayers* in which this devout matron spent a considerable part of the 38 *night as well as* of the *day*.[l] *And she coming in at that very time*, which was the hour of prayer, joined with Simeon in what he had done, and publicly *made her acknowledgments to the Lord*,[m] that is, to Jesus, who was now present

36 And there was one Anna a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity;

37 And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years; which departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day.

38 And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake

her, that the darts levelled at her son, should be reflected from his breast to hers in such a manner as to wound her very heart. Whether it be rendered *sword* or *dart*, it must undoubtedly refer to the part the holy *virgin* took in all the reproaches and persecutions which Jesus met with; but never was it so signally fulfilled, as when she stood by the cross, and saw him at once so scornfully insulted and so cruelly murdered. See John xix. 25.

[k] Had now been *a widow about eighty-four years.*] I know that Grotius and many others interpret this of her whole age; but I think it most natural to suppose, that the time of her *marriage is* opposed to that of her *widowhood.*

[l] In which she spent a considerable part of the *night as well as* of the *day.*] This is plainly the meaning of *night and day*, nor can the expression possibly signify more. Perhaps she might sometimes attend those anthems which the priests sung in the temple during the *night-watches*, Ps. cxxxiv. 1, 2; to which David may also allude, Psal. cxix. 62.

[m] *Made her acknowledgments to the Lord.* that is, to Jesus:] Ανθωμολογειτο τω Κυριω. The late English version renders it, *She expressed her thanks to the Lord, and spake of Jesus*; and it must be acknowledged

of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

in the temple; *and* afterwards *spake concerning him to all* those of her acquaintance *in Jerusalem that were waiting*, like her, *for* the promised *redemption* of Israel by the Messiah, of whose speedy appearance there was an earnest expectation raised among the pious and devout, as the appointed period of his coming now evidently approached.[n]

SECT. XI. Luke II. 38.

39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth.

And the parents of Jesus, *when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord*, departed from Jerusalem; and full of admiration at the glorious testimonies that were given to their Child, *they* some time aftewards *returned to Galilee*,[o] *to their own city Nazareth*,[p] which was the place of their usual resi- 39

there are in this very section two instances, in which the relative pronoun refers to a remote, and not immediately preceding substantive; ver. 22 and 27. But it is so evident, that Christ is often called *the Lord* by Luke, as well as by the other sacred writers, that I can see no necessity for giving this passage such a turn, contrary to all the ordinary rules of language.—And if it be objected that the infant *Jesus* did not seem capable at that time of resenting her gratitude, as a rational agent, I answer, that Anna might properly be said to *make her acknowledgments to the Lord*, if she addressed herself to the Child, as Simeon had done, confessing him to be *the Messiah*. The original phrase may have a reference to Simeon's speech, and might be intended to intimate, that this of Anna was a kind of *response*, or counterpart to his. But it is also very probable, that she, like Simeon, might also address some lofty *hymn* of *praise* to the *God of Israel* on this great occasion: and if any one think the word *Lord* is here put for *Jehovah*, though the former interpretation seems to me more just and natural, I shall not oppose it as an error of any importance.

[n] The period of his coming now evidently approached.] *The sceptre* now appeared to be *departing from Judah*, though it was not actually gone; Daniel's *weeks* were plainly near their period; and the revival of the *spirit of prophecy*, joined with the memorable occurrences relating to the birth of John the Baptist, and of Jesus, could not but encourage and quicken the expectation of pious persons at this time.

[o] *They* afterwards *returned to Galilee.*] Luke has omitted the account that Matthew gives us of the *visit* of *the wise men*, and of the holy family's retiring into Egypt; and so has taken no notice of their returning any more to Bethlehem. But there is no sufficient reason to conclude from hence, that these occurrences were antecedent to the *purification of Mary*, and that the holy family immediately returned from Jerusalem to Nazareth. For we have many other instances of a like kind, where events are connected by Luke, and the other Evangelists, which did not immediately follow each other: of which Luke xxiv. 50, is particularly memorable, as will be shewn in its proper place. I have expressed it therefore with some latitude, as it seems to me probable, that upon leaving Jerusalem they returned to Bethlehem, where they were visited by *the wise men*; and which, as they had found it to be the place appointed for the birth of Christ, they might suppose also to be the place designed for his education and abode, and might not chuse to remove from thence till God had ordered them to do it. (See Lightfoot's Harmony, Mat. ii. *init.*) However, if they now returned to Nazareth, it is more than possible, that Providence might bring them afterwards to Bethlehem, upon some occasion or other, that when the *wise men* came to inquire after Jesus they might find him in the place to which they were directed. See Mr Manne's first dissertation on the Birth of Christ, p. 41. 42, and compare note [n] on Matt. ii. 11, in the next section.

[p] *To their own city Nazareth.*] It has been suggested to me by a very learned and ingenious writer, since the publica-

SECT. XI. dence, and where (as will be seen hereafter) this Blessed Infant passed the days of his childhood and youth.

Luke II. 39.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHO can behold the pious *Simeon* thus *welcoming death*, Verse whilst he *embraced his Saviour*, without wishing to pass over the 28 intermediate moments of life to meet so peaceful a dissolution? May we, like him, approve ourselves the faithful servants of 29 God; and then we may hope that, when our *dismission* comes, we shall share in his serenity and joy!

30 We may comfortably expect it, if our eyes are now opened 31 to behold with wonder and delight, the great *salvation* he has *prepared* for his people; and if our hearts, with our lips, are 32 frequently praising him for this *light* which he hath given *to lighten the Gentiles*, as well as to be *the glory of his people Israel.*

34 As such, may *Christ* be universally owned and adored, both by *Jews* and *Gentiles*. In the mean time, while he is set up as *a mark of contradiction* and contempt, let us not be *ashamed* of him or of his words; but rather let those indignities 35 which are offered to him, be as *a sword* to *pierce through* our own souls. Let us remember that the gospel, with all the difficulties which attend it, is the great touch-stone by which God will try the characters of all to whom it comes. May our ready acceptance of it, and our zealous adherence to that sacred cause, approve the humble sincerity with which we enquire into its evidence; that *Christ* may not be to us *a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence*, but rather the means of raising us to God 38 and happiness, even to that *redemption* for which they that wait shall never be ashamed!

Our circumstances in life are various! There are comparatively few who have such leisure for extraordinary devotion as 36 was the privilege of the pious *Anna:* Where it is found let it be valued and improved: But how great and how many soever our engagements and entanglements in life may be, let the care of our souls be still our chief concern. Let us be *serving God*, in one sense or another, *night and day*; with *prayers*, pouring 37 out our souls before him morning and evening: and at proper seasons adding *fasting* to prayer, and public solemnities to private retirements!

tion of the preceding *note*, that the parents of Christ carried him back from Jerusalem to Bethlehem after the *purification*, and lived there a year or more before the *Magi* came; Joseph probably thinking it his duty to settle there, from the persuasion he had, that this wonderful Child was the Messiah, and that the Messiah was to be *educated*, as well as *born*, at Bethlehem, David's *city*. From hence he removed to Egypt; and when he was directed to come back, Joseph appears to have designed to return with Jesus to Bethlehem, had not God commanded him to go to Nazareth, a place which he seems to have esteemed too contemptible to be the abode of so illustrious a person. And this gentleman thinks, that when Nazareth is here called την πολιν αυτων, *their own city*, it intimates an attempt to settle elsewhere in a city that was *not their own*.

To conclude; let the example of these *aged saints* impress and animate those whose *hoary heads*, like theirs, are *a crown of glory, being found in the way of righteousness*, (Prov. xvi. 31.) Let those venerable lips, so soon to be silent in the grave, be now employed in shewing forth the praises of their Redeemer. *Surely days should speak, and the multitude of years should teach* such *wisdom*; (Job xxxii. 7.) Such *fruit* may they produce *in old age*: and may they have the pleasure to see all these pious attempts most thankfully received by the *rising generation*, and most gratefully improved by them; that they may quit the world with the greater tranquillity, in the view of leaving those behind them, to whom *Christ* shall be as *precious* as he hath been to them, and who will be *waiting* for God's *salvation*, while they are gone to *enjoy* it! Amen. SECT. XI. Verse 25, 37

SECT. XII.

The sages, or wise men, come from the east, under the guidance of a star, to inquire after Christ; and being directed unto Bethlehem, pay him their homage, and offer him their presents there. Mat. II. 1—12.

MAT. II. 1.

MAT. II. NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold,

NOW after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, even *in the days of Herod the* Great, who at the time of Christ's nativity was *king* of that country, there happened a memorable occurrence, which gave a great alarm to the Jews, and made the æra of Christ's birth very remarkable among them. For *behold*, there were [*certain*] *sages*,[a] that is, wise and learned men SECT. XII.

[a] *Certain sages.*] It would be quite foreign to my purpose to enumerate the various conjectures of learned men relating to these Magi. I find not amongst them all so wild an hypothesis as that of Vander Hard, (New Memoirs of Liter. Vol. II. p. 62. & seq.) that they were learned Jews who came from the colonies carried away by Shalmanezer and Nebuchadnezzar, and were *ambassadors* in the name of the whole body to pay their homage to the Messiah, and to congratulate their brethren on his birth. It is most probable they were *Gentile philosophers*, who, by the Divine Influence on their minds, had been led to improve their knowledge of *nature*, as the means of leading them to that of the one living and true God; and it is not at all unreasonable to suppose, that God had favoured them with some extraordinary revelations of himself, as he did Melchizedek, Abimelech, Job and his friends, and some others, who did not belong to the Abrahamic family, to which he never intended absolutely to confine his favours.—As to the title that is here given them, it is certain that the word Μαγοι was not appropriated in ancient times to such as practised wicked arts, but frequently was used to express *philosophers*, or men of learning; and those particularly that were curious in examining the works of nature, and in observing the motions of the heavenly bodies, (compare Dan. ii. 2. 27; and v. 11; *Septuag.*) And indeed *Magi* is become a title so familiar to us, and is so far naturalized among us, that I was almost ready to retain it in my version, had I not feared it might excite in common readers something of the same idea with magicians, which always suggests a bad sense.

SECT. XII.

Matt. II. 1.

(who, on account of their applying themselves to the study of natural philosophy, were called Magi, that had observed a bright and unusual luminary in the heavens, which they were taught to understand as an intimation, that a very Illustrious Person was then born in Judea, who was destined by God to that universal empire, the fame and expectation of which had spread so far in those parts: they therefore *came from the east*-country,[b] where they dwelt, *to Jerusalem*, the capital of the Jewish king-

there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.

2 dom; and there they began the inquiry which had occasioned them to undertake so long a journey, *saying* to those who they thought might be most likely to inform them, *Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen* a beautiful light, which we understand to be *his star*, *in the east*-country,[c] of which we are natives; *and* therefore we *are come*, in humble submission to the will of Providence, *to prostrate ourselves before him*,[d] and to pay our homage to him.

2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

3 *And king Herod*, who was a prince of a very suspicious temper, and whose cruelties had rendered him exceedingly obnoxious to his subjects, *when he heard* [*of this*] inquiry of theirs, *was* very much *troubled*; *and all Jerusalem* was also in perplexity *with him*, fearing he should make it an occasion of renewing some of those

3 When Herod the king had heard *these things* he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

[b] *Came from the east*-country.] I do not venture to determine in the paraphrase, from what part of the *east* these philosophers came. Had they been (as Mr. Fleming supposes in his Christology, Vol. II. p. 392.) a deputation from all the Magi in Persia, Media, Arabia, and Chaldea, or had they been *kings*, as the *Papists* fancy, so grand a circumstance as either of these would in all probability have been expressly recorded. I rather think, with Grotius, that they came from Arabia, which is often called the *east* (see Gen. xxv. 6, 18; Job i. 3; Judg. vi. 3; 1 Kings iv. 30; and Jer. xlix. 28.) and was famous for gold, frankincense, and myrrh, (compare ver. 11.) And if so, their journey lay through a barren and scorching country, and they were obliged to pass through deserts infamous for robbery and murder, which much illustrated their piety and zeal.

[c] *We have seen his star in the east*-country.] There is no need of supposing with some of the *fathers*, that they knew the signification of this *star*, by comparing it with Balaam's prophecy, Numb. xxiv. 17; or Daniel's, Dan. ii. 44; and ix. 25; nor can we think, as Grotius seems to intimate, that they discovered it by the rules of their *art*. It is much more probable, that they learned it by a *Divine Revelation*, which it is plain that they were guided by in their return, as we see afterwards at ver. 12.

[d] *To prostrate ourselves before him.*] This I take to be generally the signification of προσκυνειν. It is a ceremony still used to *eastern* princes, and hath been of great antiquity. Compare Gen. xlii. 6; and xliii. 26, 28.

tyrannical actions which had lately filled them with so much horror.[e] SECT. XII.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

And therefore, to secure his crown, which Herod was afraid might be in danger from this new-born King, *when he had* called a council, and had *assembled all the chief* of the *priests*,[f] *and* with them *the scribes of the people*, whose peculiar business it was to study and explain the scriptures, *he inquired of them*, *where* it was, according to the Jewish prophecies, that *the* long-expected *Messiah was to be born*.[g] *And* *they said unto him*, with one consent, He is certainly to be born *at Bethlehem in Judea*; *for so it is written by the prophet* Micah, chap. v. 2. "*And thou Bethlehem* Ephratah, *in the* "*land of Judah*, inconsiderable as thou mayest "now appear, yet *art by no means the least*[h] Mat. II. 4.

5 And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

6 And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the

[e] Filled them with so much horror.] Besides that shocking instance of his cruelty which he had formerly given in the slaughter of their Sanhedrim, (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiv. cap. 9. (al. 17. § 4) and lib. xv. cap. 1. § 2.) his barbarous inhumanity was such, that he had put to death his beloved wife Mariamne by a public execution, (Antiq. lib. xv. cap. 7). (al. 11.) § 5. and after this had caused Alexander and Aristobulus, the two sons he had by her, to be strangled in prison, on what appear to be no other than groundless suspicions. (Antiq. lib. xvi. cap. 11. (al. 16.) § 6.) These and many other instances of his cruelty are related at large by Josephus: and it was probably about this very time that he executed many of the Pharisees, on occasion of some predictions they had given out, that God was about to take away the kingdom from him: and likewise slew every one in his own family who adhered to those things that were said by the Pharisees. (Antiq. lib xvii. cap. 2. (al. 3.) § 4.) From whence it might be seen there was not any thing so barbarous and horrid which such a cruel tyrant was not capable of doing.

[f] *All the chief* of the *priests*.] *All the chief priests* must comprehend here, not only the *high-priest* for the time being, and his *deputy*, with those who formerly had borne that office, but also the *heads* of the *twenty four courses*, as well as any other persons of peculiar eminence in the priesthood. In this sense Josephus uses the word. Antiq. lib. xx. cap. 8. (al. 6) § 8. p. 975. Edit. Havercamp.

[g] *Where the Messiah was to be born*.] How strongly all this story implies a general expectation of the Messiah, I need not say. I would only observe, that Herod seems to have believed that such a person was foretold; and, on the credit of the *chief priests* and *scribes*, that he was to be born in Bethlehem; and yet was, at the same time, contriving to destroy him; which was the height of impious madness as well as cruelty.

[h] *Art by no means the least*.] When this, and several other *quotations* from the Old Testament which we find in the New, come to be compared with the *original*, and even with the *Septuagint*, it will plainly appear that the *apostles* did not always think it necessary exactly to transcribe the passages they cited, but sometimes contented themselves with giving the general sense in some little diversity of language, as Erasmus has well observed in his memorable *note* on this text. If the clause in Micah which we render, *though thou be little*, be translated, *art thou small among the thousands of Judah?* &c. it will solve the great difference which there seems to be between the *prophet* and the *evangelist*; and I think it is the easiest solution of it: for the mark of *interrogation* is not always expressed where the sense shews it must be implied. See the Hebrew of Job xli. 1, 2; 1 Kings xxi. 7; and Zach. viii. 6.—I do not urge the learned Dr. Pocock's solution, that the word צעיר signifies both *little* and *great*; which seems by no means so natural and just an account of the matter, though Veil on this place prefers it to all others.

SECT. XII. Mat. II. 6.

"*among the* cities belonging to the *princes* or "heads *of* thousands in *Judah; for out of thee* "*shall come forth a* Great and illustrious *Ruler* "*who shall feed* and govern *my people Israel*, "most wisely and tenderly performing the of- "fice of their Great Shepherd."

princes of Juda; for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people Israel.

7 *Then Herod having secretly called the sages* to an audience, *got exact information from them*[i] *about what time the star*, which they had seen, and which proved the occasion of their journey, first *appeared* to them; that he might thereby make some conjecture concerning the age of the child to whose birth it referred. (Compare ver. 16.)

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise-men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 *And* after they had satisfied his curiosity, and had informed him of the observations they had made about this star, Herod communicated to them the answer he had received from the priests and scribes; and, *sending them to Bethlehem*, as the place where they might expect to see the new-born Prince, *he said*, *Go, and make a very exact enquiry concerning the Child* you are seeking; *and when you have found him* return hither directly, and *inform me* of it,[k] *that I also*, who would permit no interests of mine to interfere with the decrees of heaven, *may come* with my family *and* court, *to pay my homage to him*, to which I look upon myself as peculiarly obliged.

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go, and search diligently for the young Child, and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 *And, having heard* this charge from *the king*, *they departed* from Jerusalem without the least suspicion of his treacherous and cruel design: *And behold*, to confirm their faith in him to whom they were going, *the* very same *star*, or meteor,[l] *which they had seen in the east* country

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star which they saw in the east went

[i] *Got exact information from them.*] That this is the signification of the word ακριβωσας, the learned Dr. Scott's note on this place hath abundantly convinced me; and to that I refer for the reason of giving this *version* of it here and in ver. 16.

[k] *When you have found him*, return—and *inform me.*] It is really an amazing thing that so suspicious and so artful a prince as Herod should put this important affair on so precarious a foot, when it would have been so easy, if he had not gone himself under pretence of doing an honour to these learned strangers, to have sent a guard of soldiers with them, who might, humanly speaking, without any difficulty, have slaughtered the child and his parents on the spot. Perhaps he might be unwilling to commit such an act of cruelty in the presence of these sages, lest their report of it might have rendered him infamous abroad; or rather we must refer it to a sacred infatuation, with which God can, whenever he pleases, confound the most sagacious of mankind.

[l] *The star*, or meteor.] I say, *meteor*, because no *star* could point out not only a town, but a particular house. It is not at all strange, Justin Martyr and other Fathers should suppose it was a *comet*, considering how little *astronomy*

SECT. XII.

before them till it came and stood over where the young Child was.

appeared to them again, and *moved on before them* in the air, *till it came* down still nearer to the earth, *and* at length *stood* directly *over* [*the place*] *where the* sacred *Infant was.* Mat. II. 9.

10 When they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And when they saw the star, thus pointing out their way, and at length by its station over it marking the very house in which they were to find him, *they rejoiced with a* transport of *joy* [*which was*] *exceeding great*,[m] to see themselves in so remarkable a manner under the divine direction, and with such certainty conducted to the glorious person whom they came to seek. 10

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him: and when they had

And when they were come into the house[n] where Mary was lodged, being now something better accommodated than at the time of her delivery, *they found the young child with Mary his mother; and* how different soever this appearance might be from what they had expected,[o] they were not at all offended at its meanness; but, *falling down* on their faces before him, *they paid him* their *homage: And*, as it was customary in those countries to offer some present to any illustrious personage they came 11

was known in their days; but one would not have imagined Grotius should have gone so far as in the least to intimate such a suspicion.

[m] *They rejoiced with a joy which was exceeding great.*] The original phrase, ἐχάρησαν χαρὰν μεγάλην σφόδρα, is emphatical beyond any thing which I can think of in our language. *They joyed a great joy very much*, though very bad English, comes nearest to a literal version.

[n] *When they were come into the house.*] Mr. Bedford observes in his Chronology, p. 740, 741, that it is not expressly said, that *the sages* came to Bethlehem: but, from the series of the account that Matthew gives us, it seems so very plain, that few have questioned it; and it is the less to be doubted, because if Christ (as that author supposes,) had been now at Nazareth, he could hardly have been carried into Egypt, without passing through Herod's dominions. But it is more difficult to determine whether, if *the sages* found him at Bethlehem, (as we have reason to conclude they did,) it was within a few weeks of his birth, or (as Mr. Manne supposes, p. 41.) about a year after, when they had spent some considerable time at Nazareth, and afterwards, on some unknown occasion, made a visit to Bethlehem, where they must have contracted some acquaintance. The latter supposition is undoubtedly favoured by Luke ii. 39; and Mat. ii. 16; unless we say, that the *star* appeared about the time of Christ's conception. It also suits best with all the arguments brought to prove that Christ was born A. U. C. 747, or 749, and that Herod died A. U. C. 750, or 751, compared with the tradition of the holy family's spending two years in Egypt. (See *Munster* on Mat. ii. 14.) These reasons have a face of strong probability, but I cannot say they entirely convince me; and therefore in the paraphrase I have determined nothing either way. Compare note [o] and [p], in the last section, on Luke ii 39. p. 57.

[o] From what they had expected.] Perhaps they expected this great Prince would have been born in the family of Herod; at least, we may be sure it was some surprise to them to find him accommodated only like *a carpenter's child*: but they wisely considered, that such miraculous honours as the *star* gave him, were far beyond any external circumstance, and therefore paid him their homage as readily, as if they had found him in the richest palace. An amiable example of that humble ingenuous temper, which fits a man for the reception of the gospel,

SECT. XII.

to visit,[p] *they opened their treasures*, which they had brought along with them for this very purpose, *and presented him with* the choicest produce of their country, fine *gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.*[q]

Mat. II. 11.

opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 *And*, after this, they were preparing to go back to Jerusalem, as Herod had desired them; but God, who knew the barbarous intent of the king, interposed for the preservation of his Son, and for their security and comfort. So, *being divinely admonished in a dream, that they should not go back to Herod, they returned into their own country, another* and more direct *way*,[r] not at all solicitous as to the consequence of Herod's resentment.

12 And, being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 2

LET us observe, with pleasure, this farther honour which God did to his *only begotten Son*, in ordering *a new star* to appear, as the signal of his birth, and in calling these *illustrious persons* from afar, to pay their early adorations to him. No doubt they thought such a discovery, as brought them to the feet of their *infant Saviour*,[s] an ample recompence for all the fatigue and expence of such a journey. *They were exceedingly transported when they saw the star.* So let us rejoice in every thing which

[p] Customary in those countries, to offer some present to any illustrious personages they came to visit.] That this was customary appears from many passages of the Old Testament. (Gen. xliii 11—25; 1 Sam. ix. 7, 8; x. 27: 1 Kings x. 2; Psalm lxxii. 10; and Prov. xviii. 16.) And Maundrel, Chardin, and many other modern writers of the best credit, assure us, the custom is yet retained. See also Ælian. Var. Hist. lib. i. cap. 31, 32, 33.

[q] *Gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.*] This was a most seasonable providential assistance, to furnish Joseph and Mary for so long and expensive a journey as that into Egypt; a country where they were entirely strangers, and yet were to abide there for some considerable time.

[r] *Another* and more direct *way.*] This seems to be intimated in the word ἀναχωρῆσαι, which might perhaps more literally have been rendered, *bend back their course.* Herod in the mean-while waiting for their return, they had time to get out of his reach before his passion rose, which might have been fatal to them.

[s] Such a discovery of their *infant Saviour.*] I take it for granted here, that they had some divine intimation or human instruction, (which Joseph and Mary might indeed have given them,) that Christ was to *save his people from their sins*, and was *Emmanuel, God with us.* Surely God would not have guided them in this extraordinary manner, merely to pay a transient compliment to Jesus. Their *prostrations* probably expressed religious adoration as well as civil respect; and it is not unlikely, that their report might in due time make way for the reception of the gospel in the country from whence they came.—And if, as early antiquity reports (Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib i. cap. 13. and both Dr. Cave (Lit. Hist. Vol. I. p. 2.) and the learned Dr. Grabe, (Spicileg. Patr. Vol. I. p. 1—6.) seem to think, some messages of extraordinary respect were afterwards sent from Abgarus, king of Edessa in Arabia, to our Lord Jesus Christ, (which might be fact, though the *letters* now remaining should be supposed *spurious,*) it is very possible, the report of these *sages*, preserved by *tradition* (if they were then dead,) might add weight to that of Christ's *miracles* (about thirty years after,) and dispose that prince to take the greater notice of him.

may be a mean of leading our souls to *Christ*, and of disposing us to cast ourselves down before him with humility and self-resignation! SECT. XII.

Let us look upon this circumstance of the sacred story as a beautiful emblem of that more glorious state of the Christian church when the *Gentiles shall come to its light*, and sages *and kings to the brightness of its rising*; when *the abundance of the sea shall be converted to it, and the wealth of the Gentiles* shall be consecrated to its honour. *The multitude of camels shall cover it, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense, and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.* Isa. lx. 3, 5, 6. Verse 10

How wonderful was the honour conferred upon so obscure a town as *Bethlehem*, when it was made thus illustrious among *the thousands of Judah!* Happy they, who consecrate not only their *gold*, and their other possessions, but also their *souls*, and their *bodies*, to their *Great Ruler*, whose office it is *to feed and govern the Israel of God*; under whose conduct and care they shall receive blessings infinitely more valuable, than all the treasures of the *East* or the *West!* 6 11

But Oh! the fatal power of carnal influence on the heart! This engaged *Herod* to receive the news of a Redeemer's birth *with horror*; and, with execrable cruelty and vile hypocrisy, to contrive his murder, under the specious form of *doing him homage.* Vain and self-confounding artifice! Let us rejoice in the thought, that *there is no understanding, or wisdom, or counsel, against the Lord*; no scheme so artfully disguised, that he cannot penetrate it, or so politicly formed, that he cannot with infinite ease confound it. 3 8

To what perplexity and grief might these *sages* have been brought, had they been made even the innocent instruments of an assault on this *Holy Child!* But God delivered them from such an alarm, and happily guided their return; so that, through his care and favour, they carried home, in the tidings of the new-born *Messiah*, far richer treasures than they had left behind. Thus shall they, who *in all their ways acknowledge God*, by one method or another find, that he will *graciously direct their paths.* 12

SECT. XIII.

The flight into Egypt; the slaughter of the infants; and the settlement of the holy family at Nazareth, after Herod's death. Mat. II. 13—23.

MAT. II. 13.

SECT. XIII. Mat. II. 13. *AND* after the return of the wise men, *when they* had paid their homage unto Christ, and *were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream,* with a message from heaven, *saying, Rise up* without any delay, *and take* with thee *the Infant and his mother, and flee* directly *into* the land of *Egypt,*[a] *and continue there till I shall give thee notice* to return; *for Herod,* alarmed by the extraordinary circumstances which have lately happened[b] *is about to* make a strict *search after the young Child to destroy him,* lest he in time should prove a formidable rival to his family.

14 *And* Joseph, *rising* from his bed, immediately obeyed the heavenly vision: for *he took the Infant and his mother by night, and withdrew,* with as hasty a flight as their circumstances would allow, *into* the land of *Egypt,* near the borders of which Bethlehem lay.

15 *And* they *continued there till* after *the death of Herod,* which happened not till several months after;[c] *that what was spoken of the*

MAT. II. 13.

AND when they were departed, behold the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young Child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy him.

14 When he arose, he took the young Child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt;

15 And was there until the death of Herod; that it might be fulfilled

[a] *Flee into* the land of *Egypt.*] This circumstance doth not at all agree with the conjecture of Grotius, that this vision might appear after their return to Nazareth; for then (as Le Clerc justly observes,) it is much more probable that they would have been ordered to flee into Syria, which was much nearer to Nazareth than Egypt; to which they could not have passed from thence, without going through the very heart of Herod's dominions, unless they had taken a very large circuit with great expence and danger.—The great number of Jews, which resided in Egypt, would make their abode there so much the more comfortable.

[b] Alarmed by the extraordinary circumstances which have lately happened.] When the wise men had come so far to pay their homage to a new-born Prince, the several reports of what had lately happened would, upon this occasion, be revived, and the behaviour of two such celebrated persons as Simeon and Anna, on the presentation of Christ in the temple, which might at first be only taken notice of by a few pious persons, would probably be now reported to Herod, and must add to the alarm which the inquiry of the sages gave him.

[c] Which happened not till several months after.] I pretend not to say exactly how many, but must content myself with referring the reader for the proof of this to Mr. Manne's most elaborate and elegant Dissertation on the Birth of Christ (p. 35—39.) which advances very considerable arguments to prove, that Christ was born in the spring, A. U. C. 747. Jul. Per. 4707, and that Herod died about the passover, A. U. C. 750. Jul. Per. 4710, probably towards the end of March; though, on further examination, I rather incline to place the birth of Christ in September or October, A. U. C. 749; and to conclude that Herod

SECT. XIII.

Mat. II. 15.

which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my Son.

Lord by the prophet Hosea, on another occasion, *might* thus, as it were, *be fulfilled* anew; and that in this appointment of the place where Christ should take up his abode, there might appear to be a manifest allusion to that *saying*, (Hos. xi. 1.) "*Out of Egypt have I called* "*my Son*;"[d] Christ being in a much higher and nobler sense the Son of God than Israel, of whom the words were originally spoken.

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth; and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem,

Then Herod, seeing that he was deluded,[e] and that a great affront (as he imagined,) was designed him *by the sages*, as there was now no farther prospect of their returning to him, *was exceedingly enraged*; *and*, in order to make the destruction of this unknown infant as sure as possible, he *sent forth* a band of murderers, *and* inhumanly *slew all the male children*[f] *that were* 16

died in March, A. U. C. 751. See Dr. Lardner's Credib. Part I. Vol. II. p. 796. —804—963, *ad fin.*

[d] *Out of Egypt have I called my Son.*] It is well known that, from the time of Julian at least, the enemies of Christianity have been cavilling at the application here made of *a prophecy* to Christ, which in its original sense seems to belong to the people of Israel. Learned men have laboured with great solicitude to prove it literally applicable to Christ.—Mr. Pierce's hypothesis (in his dissertation on this text, added to his paraphrase on Philippians, p. 105, 106), that the prophet is pursuing two subjects together, and alternately treating of each, which must therefore be read interchangeably, one part referring to the people of Israel, and the other to Christ, (as if it were designed by God, that the prophecy of Christ's being *called out of Egypt*, should be obscured by such a method) appears indeed to be very ingenious: But I fear, if such liberties were to be allowed, it would render the Scripture the most uncertain book in the world.—Bishop Chandler (in his defence of Christianity, p. 294) supposes that *calling out of Egypt* is a proverbial expression for being delivered from imminent danger; which might have been said to have its accomplishment in Christ's escape, though he had fled into Syria, Arabia, or any other country: But, with all due deference to so great a name, I must observe, that neither Isa. x. 26; Deut. xxviii. 68; or Zach. x. 11; seem sufficient to prove the use of such a phrase; and I apprehend that, if the use of such a proverb were proved, the passage before us would still seem a plainer reference to Hos. xi. 1, than to such a general form of speech; so that the difficulty would still remain.—I once thought the words KI NEHHAR ISRAEL VA-AHEBU might be rendered, and paraphrased after this manner: "*Though Israel be* "*a child*, that is, wayward and trouble- "some like a little infant, *yet I have* "*loved him, and*, in token of my tender- "ness to him, *will call* (Jesus) *my Son* "*out of Egypt*; having there preserved "him from the dangers which threaten- "ed his infancy, that he may at length "accomplish *my* great intended salva- "tion." I still think, that this conjecture deserves some consideration, as much more probable than any other solution of this kind I have ever met with. —But, on the whole, especially considering the context, because to take them, as Grotius, Heinsius, and many of the best critics do, for a mere allusion; and the rather, as I am fully convinced that the next quotation, in ver. 17, must necessarily be taken in this sense.

[e] *Seeing that he was deluded.*] The word ενεπαιχθη, which properly signifies to be *played with*, well expresses the view in which the pride of Herod taught him to regard this action, as if it were intended to expose him to the derision of his subjects, and to treat him as a child, rather than a prince of so great experience and renown.

[f] *Sent forth a band of murderers, and slew all the male-children.*] A very ingenious and learned friend of mine has at-

SECT. XIII. Mat. II. 16.

in Bethlehem, and in all the confines of it, from their entrance upon the second year,[g] *and under;* as that, *according to the time of which he had got exact information from the sages*, must include all that were born there since the appearance of the star.

and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

17 And *then*, as this cruel execution extended itself to the neighbouring places, and in particular to Ramah, a town of Benjamin, which lay near Bethlehem, *that* remarkable saying *was* farther *fulfilled*, *which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet*, (Jer. xxxi. 15.) for this was plainly an event, to which those words might be applied with more literal propriety, than to the captivity of the Jews in the time of Nebuchad-

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

tempted to account for Josephus's silence as to this remarkable fact, by a conjecture, that instead of sending forth (as it was in the first edition) *a detachment of soldiers*, (of which he justly urges, nothing is expressly said in the text,) he might only send *private orders* to have the children taken off as secretly as possible; so that it might not make any public noise and come to the notice of the Jewish historian. But, in answer to this, (not to insist upon the argument from Macrobius Saturnal. lib. ii. cap. 4. that the emperor Augustus had heard of it at Rome), I would observe, that it is certain nothing of such *privacy* in the dispatch of these children can be inferred from the word ανειλεν, since it is also used to express the crucifixion of our Lord, (Acts ii. 23; x. 39), the stoning of Stephen, (Acts xxii. 20), and the beheading of James the Apostle (Acts xii. 2); all which were public executions; as well as the intended assassination of Paul by a band of armed men. (Acts xxiii. 15.) And if it be considered, on the one hand, how difficult it is privately to murder children under two years old, as they are hardly ever left alone; and on the other, how ill such a cautious and uncertain procedure would have agreed with the furious disposition of Herod, and the haughty rage in which these orders were given, I believe few will incline to this hypothesis.—As for the *silence* of Josephus, it is to be considered, that Bethlehem was but a small place; and therefore, in a reign of so much cruelty, the slaughter of its infants might not be taken very much notice of. Josephus was not old enough to remember it himself: and if he did not find it in the memoirs of Nicholas of Damascus (that flattering historian, of whom we know he made great use in compiling the life of Herod,) he might be unwilling to introduce it, even if he were particularly acquainted with it; lest the occasion might have led him to mention what generally at least he is solicitous to decline, I mean Christian affairs. On the whole, if we compare contemporary historians of every age, we shall find some material fact or another omitted by each of them; yet that silence of one is never urged as an argument against admitting the express testimony of the rest. See Dr. Lardner's Credib. Part. I. Vol. II. book ii. chap. 2. § 1. p. 746. *& seq.*

[g] *From their entrance upon the second year.*] The reasons which determined me to render απο διετους thus, may be seen in Sir Norton Knatchbull's excellent note on this place. It is probable, that Herod in his passion ordered the slaughter of the infants as soon as he perceived that he was disappointed in his expectation of the return of the wise men, lest otherwise the Child he was so jealous of might be removed; and as his cruelty extended even to those who had entered on the second year, which is expressly said to be according to the time of which he had got exact information from the sages, it must be natural to conclude from hence, that it was not till some considerable time after the birth of Christ, that he was visited by the wise men, even though we should allow the first appearance of the star to have been (as some suppose,) about the time of *Christ's conception*. Compare note [a] on Matt. ii. 11. p. 63.—For the version of ανειλεν, see note i on ver. 7. p. 62.

nezzar, which they were originally intended to describe,[h] when they were first delivered by the prophet, *saying*, "*In Ramah there was a* "most doleful *voice heard, lamentation and* "*weeping, and abundant mourning, as* if *Ra-* "*chel*, that tender mother, who was buried "near this place,[i] had risen out of her grave, "and was *bewailing her* lost *children, and re-* "*fusing to be comforted, because they are not.*" SECT. XIII. Mat. II. 18.

18 In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

But after this, *when Herod was dead*,[k] and an end put to all his cruelties, *behold, an angel of the Lord* again *appeareth in a dream to Joseph*, while he continued to sojourn *in Egypt*, *Saying*, The way is now prepared for thy return from hence, and I am sent according to the intimation that was given thee before, to bring thee notice of it; and therefore now *arise, and take the Infant and his mother, and go* back *to* thine own abode in *the land of Israel*; *for* thou mayest safely do it, since *they are dead, who sought* to destroy *the young Child's life*.[l] 19 20

19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt.

20 Saying, Arise, and take the young Child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young Child's life.

And Joseph had no sooner heard the message that was brought him by the angel, but *he* 21

21 And he arose,

[h] Which they were originally intended to describe.] It is very evident from the following clause, (Jer. xxxi. 17.) *Thy children shall come again to their own border*, that these lamented persons were not *slain*, but carried into captivity; and it is well known, that Ramah was the place where they were assembled to be led away to Babylon. (Jer. xl. 1.) So that it is certain, this can only be an allusion, as it is intimated in the paraphrase. And I look upon this as a sure argument, that a passage in scripture, whether prophetical, historical, or poetical, may, in the language of the New Testament, be said to be *fulfilled* when an event happens, to which it may with great propriety be accommodated. See Dr. Sykes on the Truth of Christianity, chap. xiii. p. 217, *et seq.*

[i] *Rachel*, who was buried near this place.] See Gen. xxxv. 19; and 1 Sam. x. 2.

[k] *When Herod was dead.*] It is well worth while to read the particular and affecting account, which Josephus has given of the terrible death of this inhuman tyrant, whom God so remarkably made *a terror to himself*, as well as to all about him. (See Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 6. (al. 8.) § 5; & Bell. Jud. lib. 1. cap. 33. (al. 21.) § 5, 6, 7.) Eusebius thought it so great an illustration of the gospel history, that he has inserted it at large (Eccl. Hist. lib. 1. cap. 8.) with a degree of exactness, which joins with many other instances of the like nature, to show us how cheerfully we may depend upon the many invaluable extracts from a multitude of ancient books now lost, which he has given us both in his Ecclesiastical History and in his other writings, especially in his Præparatio Evangelica.

[l] *They are dead who sought* to destroy *the young Child's life.*] It is a very ingenious conjecture of Mr. Manne, that Antipater, the son of Herod, who at the time when Christ was born, was heir-apparent to his crown, and was a prince so cruel and ambitious, that he had procured the death of his two elder brothers, to clear his way to the succession, would very probably be an active counsellor and instrument in seeking the destruction of the new-born Jesus, and in advising to the slaughter of the infants. And, as this Antipater died but five days before Herod, both might be referred to in these words of the angel, *They are dead*, &c. See Manne's Dissert. p. 74, 75; and compare Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xvi. cap. 8. (al. 11.) § 4. lib. xvii. cap. 1. & 8. (al. 10.) § 1. Edit. Havercamp.

SECT. XIII. Mat. II. 21. immediately *arose, and*, cheerfully confiding in the Divine protection, *took the young Child and his mother*, according to the command he had received, *and came into the land of Israel. But* 22 *when*, upon his coming to the borders of it, *he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in the room of his father Herod*, knowing him to be the heir of his cruelty,[m] as well as of his kingdom, *he was afraid to go thither* to settle, or so much as to take it in his way; *but, being* again *divinely admonished in a dream, he withdrew into the region of Galilee*, which was under the government of Herod Antipas,[n] a prince of a milder character; and who was then on such hostile terms with Archelaus, that there was no 23 danger of his giving them up to him. *And he went and dwelt in a* little *city*, on the confines of Zabulon and Issachar, which was *called Nazareth*, where he had formerly resided before he went to Bethlehem; and being thus returned to his own city, Jesus was there brought up and educated in a place so very contemptible among the Jews, that it was grown into a proverb with them, That no good thing could be expected from thence; (John i. 46: vii. 52.) so that by this a way was further opened by the providence of God, *that it might be fulfilled, what had been spoken* in effect *by* many *of the prophets*, "*He shall be called a Nazaræan*,"[o] that is, he

and took the young Child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea, in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

[m] The heir of his cruelty.] Archelaus, in the very beginning of his reign, massacred three thousand Jews at once in the temple, and was afterwards banished, in the tenth year of his government, to Vienna in Gaul, by Augustus, on a complaint brought against him by the chief of the Jews for his various cruelties. See Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 9. (al. 11.) § 3. p. 851. & cap. 13. (al. 15.) § 2. p. 866.

[n] *Galilee*,—under the government of Herod Antipas.] Herod the Great divided his dominions by his last will, appointing Archelaus to succeed him as king of Judea, Herod Antipas to be Tetrarch of Galilee and Peræa, and Philip to be Tetrarch of Trachonitis and the neighbouring countries. (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 8. (al. 11.) § 1. But Herod Antipas endeavoured to supplant his brother Archelaus, when application was made to the Romans to confirm the will, and went to Rome with a view of obtaining the kingdom, (which was left to him in a former will,) in which he was supported by the interest of the whole family, who hated Archelaus, and thought his brother to be far more worthy of the kingdom; and, though he did not carry his point, the attempt was such, as could not but widen the breach there was before between them, and left no room for any future correspondence. See Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. cap. 9. (al. 11.) § 4. & cap. 11. (al. 13.) § 4.

[o] *He shall be called a Nazarean.*] If the solution given in the paraphrase be not allowed, I must acquiesce in Chrysostom's opinion, that the passage referred to is lost: For it is very unnatural to explain this text by Sampson's being appointed a Nazarite, Judges xiii. 5; or Messiah's being spoken of as *Netzar, the branch*, Isai. xi. 1; or to account for it with Witsius, by God's being called *Notzar, the preserver of men*, Job vii. 20. (See Wits. Meletem. Diss. § 16.) The joint

shall appear in mean and despicable circumstances, and be treated as the mark of public contempt and reproach. SECT. XIII. Mat. II. 23.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT is our fallen nature, that it can be capable of such enormities as we have now been surveying? or what imaginable circumstances of grandeur and power, can free the mind of an ambitious creature from servitude and misery? Who can behold *Herod* under the agitation of such a barbarous rage, and not see the vanity even of royal dignity, when the man that sways the sceptre over others, *hath no rule over his own spirit?* Surely none of the innocent victims of *Herod*'s wrath felt so much from the sword of their barbarous murderers, as the guilty mind of the tyrant from its own unnatural transports. Verse 16

The indignation which arises in our minds on the view of so much wickedness, finds a secret satisfaction in this thought. But how grievous is it to reflect on what the *parents* of these poor babes felt, while *the sword* that murdered their children in their very sight, *pierced through* their own bowels! *Happy*, in comparison with these, were *the wombs that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck!* Let parents remember, how soon their dearest hopes may be turned into lamentation, and learn to moderate their expectation from their infant offspring, and check too fond a delight in them. 18

Let us all learn to be very thankful, that we are not under the arbitrary power of a *tyrant*, whose sallies of distracted fury might spread desolation through houses and provinces. Let us not say, Where was the great Regent of the universe, when such a horrible butchery was transacted? His all-wise counsels knew how to bring good out of all the evil of it. The agony of a few moments transmitted these oppressed innocents to peace and joy; while the impotent rage of *Herod* only heaped on his own head guilt, infamy, and horror. *He conceived mischief, and he brought forth vanity*, (Job xv. 35.) and while he studied to prevent the establishment of the *Messiah*'s kingdom, and *set himself*, with impious rage, *against the Lord, and against his Anointed, He that sitteth in the heavens did laugh*, yea, *the Lord had him in derision.* (Psal. ii. 2, 4.) That God, who discerns every secret purpose of his enemies, and foresees every intended assault, knows how, whenever he pleases, by a thought, by a *dream*, to baffle it.

The preservation of the holy child *Jesus* in *Egypt*, may be considered as a figure of God's care over his church in its great-

sense of many scriptures is thus referred to, John vii. 38; and James iv. 5. And that the Messiah should be treated in a very contemptuous manner, was foretold by David, Psal. xxii. 6. & *seq.* lxix. 9; by Isaiah, chap. liii. and liv. and by Zechariah, chap. xi. 12, 13.

SECT. XIII. est danger. God doth not often, as he easily could, strike their persecutors with immediate destruction; but he provides a *hiding-place* for his people, and, by methods not less effectual, though less pompous, preserves his chosen seed from being swept away, even when *the enemy comes in like a flood.*

Verse 13

14, 15 *Egypt*, that was once the seat of persecution and oppression to the *Israel of God*, is now a refuge to *his son:* and thus all places will be to us, what Divine Providence will be pleased to make them. When, like *Joseph* and *Mary*, we are cut off from the worship of his temple, and perhaps removed into a strange land, he can be *a little sanctuary* to us, and give us, in his gracious presence, a rich equivalent for all that we have lost.

19 They continued here, till he gave the signal for their departure. Let us, in like manner, remember, that it is God's part to direct, and ours to obey; nor can we be out of the way of safety and of comfort, while we are following his directions, and steering our course by the intimations of his pleasure!

20 *Jesus* survived his persecutors, and returned into the land of *Israel* again; but such was his condescension, that he abode at *Nazareth*, which seems to have been allotted him as the most

23 humble station. Let us never be unwilling to *bear reproach* for him, who from his infancy endured it for us; nor take offence at the meanness of his condition, whose removes were directed by angelic messengers, as immediate envoys from the God of heaven!

SECT. XIV.

Jesus, at the age of twelve years, comes up to the passover at Jerusalem, and there discourses with the doctors in the temple, Luke, II. 40, *to the end.*

LUKE II. 40.

SECT. XIV. *AND the Child* Jesus, being returned to Nazareth, was educated in that city under the care of Joseph and his mother, and there *grew up, and became strong in spirit*, discovering early marks of a sublime and heavenly genius, and visibly appearing to be *filled with* an uncommon portion and degree *of wisdom; and* it was plainly to be seen, that *the grace of God was* eminently *upon him;* so that he made an extraordinary progress in knowledge and piety betimes, and was thus looked upon as a distinguished favourite of heaven. (Compare Judg. xiii. 24, 25.)

Luke II. 40.

LUKE II. 40.
AND the Child grew, and waxed strong in Spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

SECT. XIV.

Luke II. 41.

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

Now his pious *parents went early to Jerusalem at the feast of the passover*; as it was usual for those families to do that were remarkably religious, though only the adult males were by the law obliged to appear before the Lord on this occasion. (Compare 1 Sam. i. 3, 7. 21.)

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast.

And when he was twelve years old, and so, according to the Jewish maxims, came under the yoke of the law,[a] his parents, when *they went up to Jerusalem, according to the* usual *custom of the feast*, thought it proper to take him with them, to celebrate that glorious deliverance, which God had so many ages ago wrought for his people when he brought them out of Egypt, the memory of which was carefully to be transmitted to every succeeding generation. (Compare Exod. xii. 26, 27.)

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it*.

And when they had finished all the religious solemnities to be observed in *the days* of unleavened bread, *and were returning home, the child Jesus*, charmed with the sacred entertainments of the temple, and eagerly desirous of improving in the knowledge of his Father's law, *staid behind* them *in Jerusalem; and neither Joseph nor his mother were aware* [*of it.*]

44 But they supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

But though they saw he was not with them, yet, knowing his sociable temper, *they supposed he was* somewhere *in the company*, (as several families travelled together on such occasions:) *And* they *went a* whole *day's journey* before they missed him; *and* then, in the evening, *they sought for him amongst their kindred and acquaintance*, who were their companions in the journey, and with whom they concluded he had been.

45 And when they found him not they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him;

And, not finding him with them, *they returned* immediately, and came *back to Jerusalem seeking him* every where with great concern, and ready to suspect that some hostile assault might have been made upon him.

46 And it came to pass, that after three

And, three days after their setting out,[b] *they found him in* an appartment of *the temple*,

[a] Came under the yoke of the law.] Though I am not satisfied of the truth of Grotius's assertion, that the Jewish children under this age were called KETANIM, or little ones, and afterwards NEKHARIM, or children, (since it is certain that the word NEKHAR is often used for those under that age; see 1 Sam. i. 24; Judg. xiii. 24; and Hos. xi. 1. 3;) yet I think the fact asserted in the paraphrase is generally allowed by learned men. See Wotton's Miscel. Vol. I. p. 320; and Lightf. Hor. Heb. in loc.

[b] *Three days after* their setting out.] The first day was spent in their journey homeward, the second in their return to

SECT. XIV. Luke II. 46.

where the teachers of the law used to lecture upon it to the people; and where young persons in particular were examined, and had a liberty to ask what questions they thought proper, for their farther information.[c] Here was Jesus *sitting in the midst of the doctors*, whose profession it was to teach on these occasions; for he had placed himself among others at their feet,[d] and was, with all possible diligence, *both attending to them, and asking them* such *questions* as he judged proper, for the farther illustration of what they said.

days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors; both hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 *And all who heard him*, considering the tenderness of his age, *were in a* perfect *transport of admiration*[e] *at his understanding*, and at the penetration which he shewed, both in the questions he put to them, *and* also in the *answers* he returned to what they asked him.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48 *And when* he was discovered by his parents, and *they saw him* thus employed, *they* likewise *were struck with wonder: and his mother said unto him*, O my *son, why hast thou dealt thus with us? behold*, this is now the third day that *thy father and I have sought thee*, from place to place, *with* inexpressible *anxiety* and distress.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49 *And he said unto them, What is the cause that you have sought me* with so much concern? and why is it you were at such a loss where you should find me? *Did ye not know that I ought to be at my Father's?*[f] and that wherever I was,

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

Jerusalem, and the third in searching after Christ there.—The word *εγενετο, it came to pass*, is a mere expletive; and, not imagining that the rules of the most faithful and exact translation would oblige me always to retain it, I have frequently omitted it,

[c] For their farther information.] All these things are so well illustrated and confirmed by Dr. Lightfoot, in his Hor. Heb. on this place, that I cannot but refer the reader thither. See also Drusius's excellent note on this place.

[d] *Sitting*——at their feet.] I have often thought it a great injury to the character of our Blessed Redeemer to represent this story, whether in pictures or words, as if Christ at his tender age went up into the seats of the doctors and there disputed with them. Not one word is said of his disputing by the Evangelist, but only of his asking some questions, and answering others, which was a very usual thing in these assemblies, and indeed the very end of them. All was, no doubt, conducted with the utmost modesty and decorum. And if he were with others at the feet of these teachers (where learners generally sat, see Luke x. 39; and Acts xxii. 3,) he might be said to be in the midst of them, as they sat on benches of a semicircular form, raised above their auditors and disciples.

[e] *Were in a transport of admiration.*] Every learned reader must know that the word *εξισταντο* here and *εξεπλαγησαν* in the next verse, are much more forcible, than our translation of them, and much more literally rendered here.

[f] *I ought to be at my Father's; εν τοις του πατρος μου δει ειναι με.*] There is a known ambiguity in the original. I have chosen with Grotius, Capellus, Fuller, &c. to follow the Syriac version of the

I should be so employed in his service as to be secure of his protection? *And they did not* perfectly *understand the words which he spake unto them* upon this occasion,[g] as being expressed in something of a concise and ambiguous manner.

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

And he went down into the country *with them, and came to Nazareth; and* there he did not assume any air of superiority on account of the extraordinary applause he had met with from the people who had heard him in the temple, but still *continued subject* to his parents, and respectful *to them*, as a most dutiful and obedient child. *And his mother kept all these sayings* and occurrences *in her heart*, and often reflected very seriously upon them. 51

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

And Jesus advanced considerably *in wisdom*, as well as in age *and stature*,[h] *and* grew proportionably *in favour* both *with God and men*; his behaviour being not only remarkably religious, but so benevolent and obliging, as to gain the friendship and affection of all that were about him. 52

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET us, who are *heads of families*, take occasion from the story before us, to renew our resolutions, that *we and our house, will serve the Lord*; and remember, that it is a part of our duty, not only to God but to our domestics, to engage them with us Verse 41, 42

words, where it is rendered, *in my father's house*, which it is certain they will well bear; and so Josephus puts εν τοις του Διος for in Jupiter's temple; *contra* Apion. lib. i. § 18. p. 449. Havercamp. (Compare John xix. 27; Esther v. 10; vi. 12; vii. 9. Gr.) And indeed, though a general apprehension of his being well employed might be a reason (as it is intimated in the paraphrase) against their excessive anxiety, yet it could not (as the words in this connection seem to imply,) have directed them where to find him. It is to be remembered, this was the first visit Christ had ever made to the temple since he was a child in arms; and it is no wonder therefore that the delight he found there inclined him to protong it.

[g] *They did not perfectly understand the words that he spake unto them.*] It is strange Grotius should think συνηκαν should here be rendered, *They did not attentively consider what he said*, when the next verse assures us *Mary kept all these sayings in her heart*. The phrase only implies, that there was something more in Christ's words than at first appeared. He conjectures there might be a reference to his being *the Lord* who was to *come into his temple*, (Mal. iii. 1.) which, if there be, it is indeed very obscure. It seems more probable, it may be an intimation that he had many other important visits to make to his Father's house; which evidently appears by the sequel of the history.

[h] *In wisdom, as well as in age and stature.*] It is well known that ηλικια may signify either *age* or *stature*; but I think the latter is meant here, because the former was too apparent to need the mention. It seems a very just and important remark of Erasmus here, that all the endowments of the *Man Christ Jesus* were owing to the Divine beneficence, and that the *Deity* communicated itself in a gradual manner to that *human nature* which it had assumed.

SECT. XIV. in his public worship; the pleasures of which will surely be increased when we see them, and especially our dear *children*, joining with us in attendance on our great common Father.

Let *children* view the example of the *holy child Jesus*, with an humble desire to copy after it. Let them love the house and
Verse 43, 46 ordinances of God, and thirst for the instructions of his good word. Let them think themselves happy, if his *servants in the ministry* will bestow a part of their important time, in those exercises which are especially suited for their instruction; and let them not only be careful to return the properest *answers* they can, but at convenient times, with modesty and respect, *ask such questions*, as may be likely to improve them in knowledge and grace.

Let those *children* whose genius is most promising and most
51 admired, learn from the blessed *Jesus*, to behave themselves in an humble and submissive manner to all their elders, and especially to their *parents*; for though he was *the Lord of all*, yet was he *subject*, not only to *Mary* his real *mother*, but to *Joseph*, though only supposed to be his *father*. Such *children* may well
40, 52 hope, that the *grace of God* will still be *upon them*; and, *growing in wisdom*, as they do *in stature*, they will also advance *in favour with God and men*, and be the darlings of heaven, as well as of earth.

And, Oh, that the greatest and wisest of us, those of the longest standing, and of the most eminent stations in the church, might learn of this admirable and divine child; that, always
49 remembering our relation to God, and ever intent on learning his will, and promoting his glory, we might, with humble acquiescence, accommodate ourselves to all the disposals of his providence! How easily could he, who discovered such early
47 marks of a sublime genius and a lively wit, have relished the most elegant delights of science, and have eclipsed all the most celebrated poets, orators, and philosophers, of that learned and polite age? But he laid all those views aside, that he might pur-
41 sue the duties of that humble rank of life which his *heavenly Father*'s infinite wisdom had assigned him: and joined, as it would seem, to assist in maintaining himself, and his parents too, by the daily labour of his hands. Let us learn from hence, that it is the truest greatness of soul to know our own place and office, and to deny ourselves those amusements of the mind,[1] as

[1] Those amusements of the mind.] I hope my younger brethren in the ministry will pardon me, if I bespeak their particular attention to this thought; lest, if the main part of their time be given to the curiosities of learning, and only a few fragments of it to their great work, *the care of souls*, they see cause in their last moments to adopt the words of a dying Grotius, perhaps with much greater propriety than he could use them: *Eroh! vitam perdidi, operose nihil agendo!* —Alas! I have thrown away life in doing nothing with a great deal of pains.

well as those gratifications of the senses, which are inconsistent with the proper services of our different relations and callings.

SECT. XV.

The opening of John the Baptist's ministry. Mark I. 1—6. Luke III. 1—6. Mat. III. 1—6

MARK I. 1.

THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the son of God;

MARK. I 1.

THE beginning of the gospel-history *of Jesus Christ, the* only begotten *Son of God,* as it is recorded by the evangelist Mark, thus takes its rise from the first opening of John's ministry. It was this John that came under the character of the great forerunner of the Messiah; *as it is written in the prophets,* and particularly in Malachi (chap. iii. 1.) "*Behold, I* will "*send my messenger before thy face,* O my "Anointed Son, *who shall prepare thy way* "*before thee;* and, as the harbinger appointed "to proclaim thy coming, shall, with remarkable solemnity, make it the business of his "ministry to introduce thy kingdom." So also it was prophesied concerning him by Isaiah (chap. xl. 3.) "There shall be heard *the voice of one* "*crying in the wilderness,*[a] and solemnly proclaiming to this purpose in the deserts of Judea, *Prepare ye* with readiness *the way of* "*the Lord,* and *make his paths straight* and "smooth, by removing every thing which "might prove an obstruction to his gracious "appearance." These prophecies, (as it will presently be seen,) received a very signal and remarkable accomplishment in John, who, from his office, was surnamed the Baptist.

SECT. XV. Mark I. 1.

2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

3

LUKE III. 1. Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius

Now this eminent person made his first public appearance *in the fifteenth year of the reign of* the emperor *Tiberius Cæsar,* (reckoning the beginning of his reign from the time when Au-

Luke iii. 1.

[a] *The voice of one crying in the wilderness.*] Most commentators have imagined these words, originally to refer to the proclamation of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity: but there is no imaginable reason for supposing an immediate connection between the conclusion of the thirty-ninth chapter of Isaiah, and the beginning of the fortieth; nor can I observe any thing in the process of this chapter, which may not literally suit the Evangelical sense here given it by Mark, as well as Matthew and Luke.

SECT. XV.

Luke III. 1.

gustus made him his colleague in the empire;)[b] *when*, Archelaus being banished, and his kingdom reduced into a Roman province, *Pontius Pilate was governor*, or procurator, *of Judea; and*, as the dominions of Herod the Great had been divided after his death,[c] *Herod* Antipas, one of his sons, *was tetrarch of Galilee*, or governor of that fourth part of his dominions; *and his brother Philip tetrarch of* another fourth part, which was *the region of Iturea and Trachonitis*, (the name now given to that tract of land on the other side Jordan, which had formerly belonged to the tribe of Manasseh:) *and Lysanias* was *tetrarch of Abilene*,[d] a fair city of Syria, whose territories reached even to Lebanon and Damascus, and were peo-

2 pled with great numbers of Jews. *In those days*,[e] *while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests*,[f] *the word of God*, by prophetic inspira-

[b] Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea, and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God [in those days]

[b] Reckoning from the time when Augustus made him his colleague in the empire.] Supposing Christ was born A. U. C. 747, (as in note [c], p. 86.) it is absolutely necessary to interpret the words thus; because the fifteenth year of Tiberius, if reckoned from the death of Augustus, began in August, A. U. 781, and would thus be the thirty-fourth year of Christ's life, which is plainly inconsistent with Luke iii. 23. (See Manne's Dissert. p. 136.—140.) But if the birth of Christ be placed (as seems most probable,) in September A. U. 749, and Tiberius was admitted to a part in the empire (three years before Augustus died) in August, 764, the fifteenth year of Tiberius on this computation began in August 778. And if John entered on his ministry in the spring following, A. U. 779, in the same year of Tiberius; and after he had preached about twelve months, baptized Jesus in the spring 780, then Jesus at his baptism would be but thirty years of age and some odd months, which perfectly agrees with what St. Luke says, of his being at that time *about thirty years old*. See Dr. Lardner's Credib. Part. I. Vol. II. p. 838, 839.

[c] Divided after his death.] See note [n], on Mat. ii. 22. p. 90.

[d] *Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene.*] Some have thought this Lysanias another son of Herod the Great; but it seems much more probable, that he was descended from a prince of that name, who had been governor of that country several years before. See Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xiv. cap. 13. (al. 23.) § 3. p. 722. Havercamp.

[e] *In those days.*] This is supplied from Mat. iii. 1. where it is proper to observe that the phrase εν ταις ημεραις εκειναις is used in a very extensive sense, for that age of which he had spoken in the preceding words, though these events happened near thirty years after those recorded in the former chapter of that gospel.—And the phrase is here used with the greater propriety, as John did indeed appear under his public character while Christ continued to dwell at Nazareth; which was the event that Matthew had last mentioned.

[f] *While Annas and Caiaphas were high priests.*] As it was not Caiaphas but Ishmael that immediately succeeded Annas or Ananus. (Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xviii. cap. 2. (al. 3.) § 2. p. 873.) I cannot suppose, as some have done, that Annas was high priest the former part of this year, and Caiaphas the latter; much less that Luke knew so little of the Jewish constitution as to suppose there could be two high priests properly so called. The easiest solution is, that one was the High Priest, and the other his sagan or deputy; so that the title might, with a very pardonable liberty, be applied to both. See note [s] on John xviii. 13. Vol. II. § 184.

SECT. XV.

came unto John [the Baptist] the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness [of Judea.] [MAT. III. 1.]

tion, *came unto John the Baptist,*[g] *the son of Zacharias* and Elizabeth, who had lived for several years retired *in the wilderness of Judea.* Compare Luke i. 80. p. 51.

Luke III. 2.

3 And [MARK. John did baptize in the wilderness, and] came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; [MAT. III. 1. MARK I. 4.]

3 *And John,* at the first opening of his ministry, *did* preach with great power, and *baptize in the wilderness; and,* perceiving the people inclined to pay an attentive regard to his doctrine, he did not confine himself to that wilderness alone, but *came into all the country about Jordan,* and went a progress over it, from one place to another, on both sides the river, *preaching* every where, as he went along, *the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;* earnestly exhorting men to repent of all the irregularities of their lives, and to be baptized in token of their sincere desire to be washed and cleansed from them; and assuring them at the same time that, if they attended on this institution in a truly penitent manner, they might consider it as a pledge and token of their being forgiven by God.

MAT. III. 2. And saying, Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Mat. III. 2.

And while he was thus urging his exhortation, *and saying, Repent ye,* he pleaded with them a very new and important argument: *For* (said he) *the* long-expected *kingdom of heaven is* now *approaching*;[h] and God is about to appear,

[g] *The word of God came unto John the Baptist.*] I think these words declare, as expressly as any words can, that John was called to his prophetic work in the fifteenth year of Tiberius; so that, if Mr. Manne's arguments prove (as he supposes they do) that Christ was crucified in that fifteenth year, then it will follow, that all the events, both of John's ministry and of our Lord's, must be reduced within the compass of one year; which is, for reasons elsewhere given, utterly incredible. To conclude, that by the language which Luke here uses, he intends to express the time of Christ's death, though it did not happen in the same year, is doing the greatest violence imaginable to the whole passage. How much easier would it be to admit of a little more latitude in the interpretation of Dan. ix. 26, an aversion to which seems to have plunged that accurate and ingenious writer into a train of inextricable difficulties through all the latter part of his second essay.

[h] *The kingdom of heaven is approaching.*] Dr. Sykes, in his Essay on the Truth of the Christian Religion, chap. iii. has largely proved, that this phrase refers to those texts in Daniel quoted in the paraphrase. It properly signifies the Gospel dispensation, in which subjects were to be gathered to God by his Son, and a society to be formed, which was to subsist first in more imperfect circumstances on earth, but afterwards was to appear complete in the world of glory. In some places of scripture, the phrase more particularly signifies the former, and denotes *the state of it on earth*; (see Mat. xiii. throughout, especially ver. 41, 47, and Mat. xx. 1); and sometimes it signifies only *the state of glory;* (1 Cor. vi. 9. and xv. 50.) but it generally includes both. It is plain, that the Jews understood it of *a temporal monarchy* which God would erect; the seat of which they supposed would be Jerusalem, which would become, instead of Rome, the capital of the world; and the expected Sovereign of this kingdom, they learned from Daniel, to call *the Son of man;* by

SECT. XV.

in an extraordinary manner, to erect that kingdom spoken of by Daniel, (chap. ii. 44; and vii. 13, 14.) as the kingdom of the God of heaven, which he would set up and give to the Son of man; making it finally victorious over all other kingdoms. It is therefore (said the Baptist,) of the highest importance, that you should be the subjects of this kingdom; which, without a sincere and universal repentance, you cannot possibly be.

Mat. III. 2.

Luke III. 4.

And upon this occasion, he failed not to repeat, and to insist upon that passage of scripture, (which has in part been just now mentioned,) making it evident, that this was all exactly *as it is written in the book of discourses* and prophecies *of the prophet Isaiah; for this* indeed *is he who was spoken of* so expressly by that sacred writer, (chap. xl. 3, 4, 5,) when he is *saying*, with a manifest reference to the Messiah's kingdom, "There shall be heard *the* "*voice of one crying* aloud *in the wilderness*, "*Prepare ye the way of the Lord* with the most "thankful readiness, and cheerfully set your- "selves to *make his paths straight* and plain, "by removing every thing which might prove "an obstruction when he comes on so gracious
5 "a design. *Every valley shall* therefore *be* "*filled* up, *and every mountain and hill shall* "*be brought down* before him;[1] *even the crook-* "*ed roads shall be made* into a *straight* way, "*and the rough places shall be laid* smooth and "*level*; for by the mighty power of his grace, "which shall be now remarkably displayed, "such a victorious way shall be made for his "gospel, and it shall be propagated with such "speed and success, that it shall seem, as if the

LUKE III. 4. *As* it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet [for this is he that was spoken of] saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight: [MAT. III. 3.]

5. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;

which title they understood a very excellent person, who was the promised Messiah, the Christ, or the *Anointed One* of God. Both John the Baptist then, and Christ, took up this phrase, and used it as they found it, and gradually taught the Jews to affix right ideas to it, though it was a lesson they were remarkably unwilling to learn. This very demand of repentance shewed it was a *spiritual kingdom*; and that no wicked man, how politic or brave, how learned or renowned soever, could possibly be a genuine member of it. See my Sermons on Regeneration, Numb. IV. p. 106—117.

[1] *Every mountain and hill shall be brought down* before him.] Grotius has most elegantly illustrated the reference that appears so plainly in this passage, to the custom of sending pioneers to level the way before princes when they are coming with numerous attendants: but by the import of the language that the prophet uses, it is plainly to be seen that the main work is God's, though men are called to concur with him in it; which is every where the scheme of scripture, as it certainly is of sound reason. Compare Phil. ii. 12, 13.

" whole face of nature were miraculously SECT.
" changed; and mountains and valleys, and XV.
" forests and rocks, were to spread themselves
" into a spacious plain before the messenger of Luke III. 6.
" it. *And* thus, not the land of Israel alone,
" but *all flesh*, or the whole human race, not
" excepting the remotest Gentile nations, *shall*
" *see* and admire *the* great *salvation of God*."

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

Now, that this extraordinary message might Mat. III. 4.
meet with the greater regard, God was pleased
to send it by a person on many accounts re-
markable, and especially for the temperance,
and even the severity of his manner of living.
For *this John wore*, (as the ancient prophets
used to do,) *a* rough *garment* which was made
of camel's hair, and so indeed was but a kind of
sackcloth; *and* he had *a leathern girdle about his*
waist: (compare 2 Kings, i. 8; Zech. xiii. 4;
Rev. vi. 12; and xi. 3.) *And* as for *his food*, it
was such as the wilderness afforded, which *was*
frequently nothing but a large kind of *locusts*,[k]
which the law allowed him to eat; (Lev. xi. 21,
22,) *and wild honey*, often to be found in hollow
trees, or in the clefts of the rocks. Compare
1 Sam. xiv. 26; Judg. xiv. 8; and Psal. lxxxi.
16.)

MAT. III. 4. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. [MARK I. 6.]

These uncommon circumstances of his public 5
appearance concurred with the time of it, to
awaken in the people a great regard for his

5. Then went out to him, [they of] Je-

[k] A large kind of *locusts*.] Though it may be allowed, on the authority of the accurate Sandys, (see his valuable Travels, p. 183.) and many others, that there is in these parts a shrub called the Locust-Tree, the buds of which something resemble Asparagus; yet notwithstanding all the pains Sir Norton Knatchbull has taken to prove it, I cannot imagine the word ἀκρίδες is here to be understood, as referring to the product of it. It is certain, the word in the Septuagint and elsewhere, generally signifies the animal which we call a locust, or a large winged grasshopper, (See Rev. ix. 3, 7, 9.) which the law allowed the Jews to eat, (Lev. xi. 21, 22.) and which Pliny assures us, made a considerable part of the food of the Parthians and Ethiopians, (See Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xi. cap. 29; and lib. vi. cap. 30.) The matter is excellently illustrated by the learned notes of Heinsius, Drusius, and Elsner, on this place: but Erasmus is tediously prolix upon it; and, which is strange, he is very warm too. What need have we to keep a guard upon our spirits, when so great and so good-natured a man could be angry in a debate of so small importance!—I shall add only on this point, with respect to the use of locusts for food, what Dr. Shaw tells us, that, when sprinkled with salt, and fried, they taste much like the river cray-fish; who justly contends for this signification of the word ἀκρίδες in his excellent Travels, p. 258: where he also observes that, as the months of April and May are the time when these insects abound, it may probably be conjectured, that John began his ministry about that season of the year; which might also seem more convenient for receiving, and especially for baptising, so great a number of people, than winter could have been.

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SECT. XV.

preaching: for their uneasiness under the Roman yoke, which *then* bore hard upon them, raised the most impatient desire of the Messiah's arrival; by whom they expected, not only deliverance, but conquest, and universal monarchy. They therefore attentively listened to this proclamation of his approach; so that *the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and* multitudes out of *all the land of Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, went out* to hear him, and were attentive *to him.*[1] And great numbers of them were brought under very serious impressions by his faithful remonstrances, expostulations, and warnings: *and* those that were awakened to repentance, *were all baptised by him in the river Jordan;* expressing the convictions they were under, by *confessing their sins*, and, by submitting to this rite, engaging themselves for the future to reformation and obedience.

Mat. III. 5.

6

rusalem, and all [the land of] Judea, and all the region round about Jordan. [MARK I. 5.]

6 And were [all] baptised of him in [the river of] Jordan, confessing their sins. [MARK I. 5.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mark i. 1.

WITH what pleasure should we hear *the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God!* and with what reverence remember the dignity of his divine nature, amidst all the condescensions of his incarnate state!

Mat. iii. 2.

It is surely matter of unspeakable thankfulness, that the *kingdom of heaven* should be erected among men! that the great God should condescend so far, as to take to himself a people from our mean and sinful world, and appoint his own *Son* to be the governor of that *kingdom!* How happy are we, that it is preached among us, and we are called into it! Let it be our great care, that we be not only nominal, but real members of it.

Verse 6

For this purpose let us remember, and consider that, to become the subjects of this kingdom, we are to enter into it by the way of *repentance;* humbly *confessing our sins*, and resolutely forsaking them, if we do indeed desire to find mercy.

Luke iii. 3.

Let us bless God, both for the promises of *pardon* and for the appointment of the *seals* of it, particularly of *baptismal washing;* always remembering the obligation it brings upon us, to *cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* (2 Cor. vii. 1.)

Verse 4, 6

And, being ourselves become members of *Christ's kingdom*, let us pray that it may be every where extended. May Divine Grace remove every obstruction, and make *a free course* for his

[1] *Went out to him.*] The novelty of a prophet's appearance in Israel, the family of John, the circumstances of his birth, and the extraordinary character he had no doubt maintained for strict and undissembled piety, all concurred with the causes mentioned in the paraphrase, to draw such vast multitudes after him.

gospel, that it may every where *run and be glorified*, so that *all flesh may see the salvation of God!* SECT. XV.

John, with this awful severity of manners and of doctrine, was sent *before Christ to prepare his way*. Let us learn to reflect, how necessary it is, that the *law* should thus introduce the *gospel*; and let all the terrors of *Moses* and *Elias* render the mild and blessed *Redeemer* so much the more welcome to our souls! Mat. III. 4.

SECT. XVI.

John the Baptist addresses suitable admonitions to those that attended his ministry, and proclaims the approach of the Messiah. Mat. III. 7—12; Mark I. 7, 8; Luke III. 7—18.

MAT. III. 7.

BUT when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers,

MAT. III. 7.

WHEN John opened his ministry, there were two different sects among the Jews; that of the Pharisees, who were exceeding strict in ceremonial institutions, and in the observation of human traditions; and that of the Sadducees, who, among other very obnoxious notions, denied the existence of spirits, and a future state of rewards and punishments; yet some of both these sects, out of curiosity or popular custom, or for some other unknown reason, attended on the preaching of this holy man: *And when he saw* among the multitudes that came to be baptized by him, that *many* both *of the Pharisees and Sadducees*,[a] were *coming to* receive *his baptism*;[b] as he well knew the open profaneness of the one, and the secret wickedness of the other, *he* did not flatter them at all in his address, but *said unto them*, as with some surprize, *O ye* abominable *broods of vipers*,[c] crafty, malignant, mischievous creatures, *who hath* taught you to SECT. XVI. Mat. III. 7.

[a] *Pharisees and Sadducees.*] The most authentic account of these sects may be seen in Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xviii. cap. 1. (al. 2.) & Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 8. (al. 7.) Havercamp. All writers of Jewish Antiquities describe them largely; but, I think on the whole, none better than Dr. Prideaux, Connect. Vol. II. p. 335—343.

[b] *Coming to* receive *his baptism.*] I express it in this manner, for, though some understand the words επι το βαπτισμα αυτου, of their coming *to oppose his baptism*, I think the reasons for that interpretation not worth mentioning here, and refer my reader to Raphelius, who has given them a larger examination than they deserve. Annot. ex Xen. p. 7—11.

[c] *O ye broods of vipers.*] Some think this is to be understood, as if it had been said, *Ye wicked children of wicked parents*: but such a reflection on their parents is not necessarily implied. The *children* of pious Eli are called *sons of Belial*, merely with reference to their own licentious characters, *as they knew not the Lord*. See 1 Sam. ii. 12.—The word γεννηματα may be used in the plural number, in reference to the different sentiments, and, if I may be allowed the expression, (familiar enough to the Jewish doctors,) the different families of these sects in question.

SECT. XVI.

put on this form of humility and repentance, and *admonished you to flee from the wrath* which is surely and speedily *to come?* What is it that hath moved you to it, when you Pharisees think yourselves so secure from it on account of the pretended sanctity of your lives; and you Sadducees imagine it to be no other than a mere fable and a dream? Let me exhort you *therefore*, if you design to be baptized by me, to make it your serious and resolute care, to *bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, and to act like those that are penitents indeed, forsaking, as well as confessing your sins: *And*, if you neglect this, *do not* presumptuously *think* it will be to any purpose for you *to say within yourselves, We have Abraham for our father*;[d] relying on your descent from that holy patriarch, and your being that seed of his with whom a peculiar covenant was made: *for I* solemnly *say*, and declare it *unto you* as a certain and important truth, *That God is able, of these* very *stones* that are before your eyes,[e] which he can animate and sanctify whenever he sees fit, *to raise up* those who, though not descended from human parents, shall be, in a much nobler sense than you, *children to Abraham*, as being made the heirs of his faith and obedience; and he would sooner work such a miracle as this, than he would suffer his promise to fail, or admit you to the blessings of his approaching kingdom, merely because you have the abused honour to descend from that peculiar favourite of heaven. These are truths of constant concern, and now particularly seasonable; for the patience of God will not much longer endure so provoking a people. You think of national deliverance, but be-

Mat. III. 7. who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? [LUKE III. 7.]

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for [*or* worthy of] repentance: [LUKE III. 8.]

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. [LUKE III. 8.]

10 And now also the axe is laid unto

[d] *We have Abraham for our father.*] Dr. Whitby well shews, how great the presumption of the Jews on this relation to Abraham was. Munster, on this text, quotes a remarkable passage from the Talmud, in which it is said, "That Abraham sits next the gates "of hell, and doth not permit any "wicked Israelite to go down into "it." These Jews might perhaps pervert the promise in Jer. xxxi. 35, 36, to support this vain and dangerous confidence in opposition to such a multitude of most express and awful threatenings; particularly Deut. xxxii. 19, *&c seq.*

[e] *Of these very stones* that are before your eyes.] The many learned commentators, who refer this to God's calling the Gentiles, supposing some of them to be present here, seem to lose all the beauty of the expression; which I have paraphrased at large, because I think few, if any, have set it in so strong a light as it will well bear. It is but a precarious conjecture, that the stones here referred to, were those set up in Gilgal, Josh. iv. 3, 20.

the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. LUKE III. 9.]

SECT. XVI.

ware of national judgments; for I assure you that the hand of God is lifted up, *and the axe* of Divine Justice *is even now*, as it were, *applied to the* very *root of the trees*; and *therefore every tree that doth not produce good fruit*, (even every one that, while he professeth himself to be one of God's people, contradicts that profession by a life of wickedness, or by the neglect of vital and practical religion,) *is* very certainly and quickly to be *cut down*[1] by death, *and thrown into the fire* of hell. Mat. III. 10.

LUKE III. 10. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

Upon this many of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who expected to have been treated with greater respect, were so provoked, that they turned their backs upon the prophet, and refused to be baptized. (Compare Luke vii. 29, 30; and Mat. xxi. 25.) But it was otherwise with the common people, who were alarmed by what he said, *and the multitudes*, who were more teachable, *asked him, saying, What then shall we do*, that we may be prepared for the kingdom of the Messiah, and may escape this dreadful condemnation and approaching wrath? *And he answereth and saith unto them*, Be careful not only to observe the ceremonies of religion, but to attend to the great duties of justice and of charity too, which are incumbent upon you, as well as on the great and rich; and *he*, for instance, *that hath two coats, let him impart* one of them *to him that hath none; and he that hath* plenty of *food, let him do the like.* Luke III. 10. 11

11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

Then there *came also* some of the *Publicans to be baptized:* now these Publicans were a set of men, whose office it was to collect the taxes which the Romans had imposed on the Jews, and to pay them to others, who were called the chief of the Publicans; and these people, being generally persons of an infamous character, for their injustice and oppression, applied themselves to John under a strong conviction of their guilt, *and said unto him, Master, what shall we do* to testify the sincerity of our repentance? 12

12 Then came also Publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

[1] *Is* very certainly and quickly to be *cut down.*] It is expressed, in the original, in the present tense; and it may be of some importance to observe here, that in scripture-language, that which is very sure, and very near, is spoken of as if it was *already done.* Thus Christ speaks of himself, as if he was already in possession of his glory, while he was here on earth, John xvii. 24; and sinners too are represented as *condemned already*, John iii. 18; and saints are spoken of as *already glorified*, Eph. ii. 6; and Heb. xii. 22, 23.

SECT. XVI. Luke III. 13.

And he said unto them, Though you are not absolutely required to quit your employment, take care that you *exact nothing more than is enjoined you* by your principals, whose servants you are in collecting the public money.

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

14 *And the soldiers also* applied themselves to him[g] on the same occasion, and in like manner *asked him, saying, And*, as for us, *what shall we do? And he said unto them, Terrify no man*[h] by a violent overbearing conduct, *nor wrong* [*any*] *by false accusation*, in order to get a liberty of living upon him at free quarters; *and be contented with your* legal wages, or *pay*,[i] not raising mutinies and seditions to get it increased.

14 And the soldiers, likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely, and be content with your wages.

15 *And, as the people were in* great *suspense, and all were reasoning in their hearts* with much solicitude *concerning John*, debating the matter with themselves, *whether he were the Messiah or not*, 16 *John answered all* that put the question to him, in the most direct and positive manner, *saying, I indeed baptize you with water*, to engage you *to* the exercise of *repentance*, which by submitting to that rite you solemnly profess; *but there is one coming after me*, even the Messiah himself, *who is* much *more powerful* and considerable *than I* can pretend to be; (see John x. 41.) *whose* very *shoes I am not worthy* so much as *to carry* after him, [*or*] *to stoop down and untie the latchet of* [*them*,] but should esteem it as an honour to perform the humblest office of menial service for him. And, if you are indeed his people, *he shall baptize you with* a most plentiful effusion of *the Holy Spirit, and*

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or not;

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water [unto repentance;] but one mightier than I cometh [after me, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear,] the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to [MAR. stoop down and] unloose: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: [MAT. III. 11; MARK I. 7, 8.]

[g] *The soldiers* applied themselves to him.] There is no reason to believe, that these were Gentile soldiers. Grotius has excellently proved, that the Jews in general did not scruple a military life; and a multitude of passages from Josephus might be added to the same purpose: and though most of the *soldiers* in Judea, which was now a province, might be Romans, yet those belonging to Galilee might probably be Jews. Had these been Gentiles, John would surely have begun his instructions to them with urging the worship of the true God.

[h] *Terrify no man.*] The word διασεισητε properly signifies "to take a man by the "collar and shake him;" and seems to have been used proverbially for that violent manner, in which persons of this station of life are often ready to bully those about them, whom they imagine their inferiors in strength and spirit; though nothing is an argument of a meaner spirit, or more unworthy that true courage which constitutes so essential a part of a good military character.

[i] *With your* legal wages or *pay*.] The word οψωνιοις is well known to signify *provision* or *food*; but, when applied to soldiers, it is generally used to signify *the pay* that was allotted for their subsistence. (Compare Rom. vi. 23; where it is rendered *wages*; and 1 Cor. ix. 7; where we translate it *charges*.)

SECT. XVI.

Luke III. 16.

with fire; causing his Spirit to descend upon his followers in the appearance of a flame of fire, to represent its operating on the heart like fire, to kindle pious and devout affections, and to purify and enliven the souls of believers. (Compare Acts i. 5; and ii. 3.)

17 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable. [MAT. III. 12.]

17 But you are to remember, this is an awful, as well as an amiable Person, *whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly* winnow and *cleanse* his church, which is, (as it were) *his threshing floor*, and at present is covered with a mixture of wheat and chaff: for such will be the nature of the doctrine he shall teach, as will effectually discover what is the real disposition of the hearts of men, and perfectly distinguish between the hypocritical and the sincere. *And* happy will it be for those that stand the trial: for he *will* carefully *gather* them, as *the wheat into his granary*, and lay them up in heaven as his peculiar treasure: *but* as for *the chaff* which is found among them, as for those empty vain professors that are now mingled with his people, *he will* then treat them as men do the sweepings and the refuse of the floor, and *burn* them up as worthless and unprofitable trash; and I faithfully warn you, that it will be *with unquenchable fire:*[k] let this excite you therefore to escape so terrible a doom. (Compare Isa. xli. 16; Jer. xv. 7; and Ezek. xxii. 15.)

18 And many other

Such was, in general, the tendency and pur-

[k] *The chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.*] There is in what the Baptist here declares, an evident allusion to the custom of burning the chaff after winnowing, that it might not be blown back again, and so be mingled with the wheat: and, though it may in part refer to the calamities to come upon the Jewish nation for rejecting Christ; (as Bishop Chandler has observed in his Defence of Christianity, p. 85.) yet it seems chiefly to intend the final destruction of all sinners in hell, which alone is properly opposed to *the gathering the wheat into the garner*: (compare Mat. xiii. 40, 41, 42,) and howsoever it be certain that the word αχυρον in Greek authors does generally signify *all that is left of the corn* when the grain is separated, including *the straw*; (see Raphael. Annot. ex Xen. in loc. and Gen. xxiv. 25—32, Septuag.) yet I apprehend, that in this place it must be equivalent to χνους, and signify *chaff* as distinguished from *straw*; since one can hardly imagine either that any thing so useful as *straw* would be made the symbol of these worthless *reprobates*, or that it would be represented as *burnt up*.—As to the phrase of burning the chaff with *unquenchable fire*, Mr. Horberry has observed, with his usual accuracy of judgment. (Inquiry into the Duration of Future Punishment, Chap. i. No 1, 2,) that it is absolutely inconsistent with all views of the *restoration of the wicked*; and that, however the phrase of being *consumed like chaff*, might seem to favour the doctrine of their *annihilation*, (which nevertheless it is certain no punishment of mind or body can of itself effect,) the epithet of *unquenchable* given to this *fire* is so far from proving it, that it cannot, by any easy and just interpretation, be reconciled with it.

SECT. XVI.

port of John's preaching: *And, offering many other exhortations* to them to the same effect, *he published to the people these glad tidings*[1] of the Messiah's approach, and endeavoured to prepare them, to receive him in a proper manner; as will be more particularly shewn hereafter. (See John i. 15, & *seq.* and iii. 28, & *seq.*)

things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

Luke iii. 18.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. iii. 7.

WHAT an excellent pattern of ministerial service does *John* exhibit in the passage before us! Blessed is that *gospel preacher* who, like him, seeks not his own ease and pleasure, and indulges not too luxurious and sensual inclinations, but cheerfully accommodates himself to the state and circumstances which Providence hath assigned him, as infinitely more intent on the success of his ministry than on any little interest of his own that can interfere with it!—Happy the man who, imitating the impartiality of this faithful servant of God, *giveth* to every one *his portion of meat in due season*, and abhors the thoughts of flattering men in their vices, or buoying them up with delusive hopes in their birth and profession, while they are destitute of real and vital religion!

Luke iii. 10—14.

Mat. iii. 9.

May this plain and awakening address be felt by every soul that hears it! And, in particular, let the *children* of religious parents, let those that enjoy the most eminent privileges, and that make even the strictest profession, weigh themselves in this *balance of the sanctuary*, lest they be *found wanting* in the awful decisive day. And if the warnings of the gospel have alarmed our hearts, and put us upon *fleeing from the wrath to come*, Oh, let *the terrors of the Lord* engage us, not only to *confess*, but to *forsake* our sins, and to *bring forth fruits meet for repentance!*

Ver. 8.

Let all to whom the gospel message comes, most attentively and seriously consider, in what alarming circumstances of danger and extremity impenitent sinners are here represented. The *gospel* is the last dispensation we must ever expect; *the axe* is *at the root of the* unfruitful *tree*, and it must ere long be *cut down* and *burnt*, be its branches ever so diffusive, and its leaves ever so green.

10

Luke iii. 17.

Christ hath *a fan in his hand* to winnow *us*, as well as the *Jews*. Oh that we may stand the trial! And Oh that, as his *wheat*, we may be laid up in the store-house of heaven, when *that day cometh*, which shall *burn as an oven*, and when *all that do wickedly* shall be consumed as *stubble*, and be *burnt up* as *chaff*! (Mal. iv. 1.)

[1] *Published these glad tidings*] Ευηγγελιζετο has plainly this import; and as it was a very imperfect intimation, rather than a full discovery of the gospel that was given by the Baptist, it does not seem so proper here to render it by *preaching the gospel*, though the word has often that signification; see Mat. xi. 5; Luke iv. 18; and Acts viii. 4, &c.

And to conclude; that we may be prepared for that final trial, let us be earnest in our applications to our gracious Redeemer, that as we are *baptized with water* in his name, he would also *baptize us with the Holy Ghost and with fire*; that, by the operations of his Holy Spirit on our cold and stupid hearts, he would enkindle and quicken that divine life, that sacred love, that flaming, yet well governed zeal for his glory, which distinguishes the true christian from the hypocritical professor, and is indeed *the seal of God* set upon the heart, to mark it for eternal happiness. SECT. XVI. Verse 16

SECT. XVII.

The testimony John the Baptist gave to Christ is taken notice of by John the Evangelist, and his own testimony added to confirm it. John I. 15—18.

JOHN I. 15.

JOHN bare witness of him and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He

AS the Messiah now was shortly to appear, and the time just at hand in which he was to enter on his public ministry, the way (as we have seen) was opened for his coming by John the Baptist's being sent to preach the doctrine of repentance: and when the people came in crowds from every part to hear him, *John bore his testimony of him* in a public declaration of the dignity of his person, and of the great design for which he was to come; which, though it was at first expressed in general terms, yet did he afterwards apply it in particular to Jesus of Nazareth, pointing him out to be the person he had spoken of; and, with an earnestness that suited the importance of this grand occasion, he openly proclaimed him to be the promised Messiah, *and cried, saying*, This is the person that I told you of; and *this is he of whom I said* before,[a] (Mat. iii. 11.) *He that cometh after* SECT. XVII. John I. 15.

[a] *This was he of whom I said.*] This probably might happen at the time, when Jesus made his first appearance among those that came to be baptized by John; when at his offering to receive his baptism: though John before had been a stranger to him, and *knew him not* by any personal acquaintance with him, yet, by some powerful impression on his mind, he presently discerned that *this was he*, whom he before had taught the people to expect, and of whose person he had given them so high a character. For it was plainly from his knowledge of him, that John at first would have declined baptizing him, as an honour of which he looked upon himself to be unworthy. Nor is it to be doubted, but that when first he knew the person, of whose appearance he had raised such expectations by his preaching, he would immediately be ready to acquaint his hearers, that *this was he*, who was intended by him; which they themselves might have been ready to conclude, from the uncommon veneration and respect

SECT. XVII. John i. 15.

me, as to the time of his appearance in the world, and of his entrance on the stage of public life, is upon all accounts superior to me, and *is* deservedly *preferred before me ; for*, though indeed as to his human birth he is younger than me, and did not come into the world till a little after me, yet, in a much more noble and exalted kind of being, *he existed* long *before me*,[b] or even before the production of any creature whatsoever.

that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me:

16 *And* I John the apostle, who had the honour of being numbered among his most intimate friends would, with pleasure, in my own name, and that of my brethren, add my testimony to that of the baptist,[c] as I and they have the greatest reason to do: for *of his* overflowing *fulness have we all received* whatever we possess, as men, as christians, or as apostles; and he hath given us *even grace upon grace*,[d] a rich abundance and variety of favours, which will ever make his name most dear and precious to our souls.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 *For the law was given by Moses*, and we own it an honour to our nation to have received it, and to that holy man to have been the messenger of it; yet to the sinner it is a dispensation of death, and passes an awful sentence of con-

17 For the law was given by Moses, but

with which the Baptist treated him, who had been always used to treat men with the greatest plainness. And upon this account it may be proper, that this testimony of him should be introduced (as I have placed it here) before the particular account that the other evangelists have given of his baptism. Compare Mat. iii. 14: and John i. 27—30.

[b] *He existed* long *before me ;* πρωτος μου ην.] This must undoubtedly refer to that state of glory in which *Christ existed* before his incarnation, of which the Baptist speaks so plainly, Jo. iii. 31, as abundantly to justify the paraphrase; (compare note [b] on John i. 30; § 21. As for the preceding clause, εμπροσθεν μου γεγονεν, which we render *is preferred before me*, I think Erasmus truly expresses the sense of it, in supposing it to refer to those distinguishing honours, which had been paid to Christ in his infancy, by prophets, sages, and angels too, which nothing that had yet occurred in the life of John could by any means equal.

[c] I add my testimony to that of the Baptist.] It is most evident, that what is said here in this verse, as Chrysostom justly observes, must be considered as the words of the evangelist. John the Baptist had never yet mentioned the name of Jesus; and the expression *we all*, shews it could not be his words; for those to whom he addressed himself, do not appear to have *received grace* from Christ. The last French version, with great propriety, includes ver. 15 in a parenthesis, and so connects this 16th verse with the 14th;—as if it had been said, *He dwelt among us—full of grace and truth; —and of his fulness have we all received.*

[d] *Grace upon grace.*] This seems the most easy sense of χαριν αντι χαριτος, as αντ' ανιων ανιας is *grief upon grief.* [*Theogn.* v. 344.) Compare Ecclus. xxvi. 15—17: and see Blackwall's Sacred Classics, Vol. I. p. 164. Next to this, I should prefer Grotius's interpretation, who would render it, *grace of mere grace*; that is, the freest grace imaginable.

grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

demnation upon him; [*but*] the Redeemer whom we celebrate is worthy of much more affectionate regards; for *grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*,[e] who gives us an ample declaration of pardon, and an abundant effusion of the Spirit, those substantial blessings of which the Mosaic dispensation was but a shadow. His gospel therefore should be received with the most cheerful consent; for *no man hath ever seen God*, nor indeed can see him, as he is an incorporeal, and therefore an invisible Being; but *the Only-Begotten Son, who is* always *in the bosom of the Father*,[f] and ever favoured with the most endearing and intimate converse with him, *He hath* revealed and *made him known* in a much clearer manner than he was before, by those discoveries of his nature and will, which may have the most powerful tendency to form us to virtue and happiness.

SECT. XVII.

John I. 17

18 No man hath seen God at any time; the Only-Begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

18

IMPROVEMENT.

HAPPY are they, that (like this beloved *apostle*,) when they hear the praises of *Christ* uttered by others, can echo back the testimony from their own experience, as having themselves *received of his fulness!* May an abundance of *grace* be communicated from him to us! We are not *straitened* in him; Oh, may we not be *straitened* in ourselves; but daily renewing our application to him as our Living Head, may vital influences be continually imparted to our souls from him!

Verse 16

With pleasure let us compare the dispensation of *Jesus* with that of *Moses*, and observe the excellency of its superior *grace* and of its brighter *truth*: but let us remember, as a necessary consequence of this, that *if the despisers of Moses's law died without mercy, they shall be thought worthy of a much sorer*

17

[e] *Came by Jesus Christ.*] I cannot lay so much stress on the word ἐγένετο here, as opposed to ἐδόθη, as to suppose it, with Erasmus, to imply, that whereas Moses was only the *messenger* of the *Law*, Christ was the *original* of the *grace and truth* he brought into the world by the *gospel*; since all that is intended by ἐγένετο is nothing more, than that *it was*, or that *it came, by Jesus Christ*, according to the sense in which the word is often used in other places; and διὰ here is used of Christ as well as of Moses: so that both are represented as *messengers*, though of very different dispensations.

[f] *In the bosom of the Father.*] Critics generally agree, this is one of the places in which εἰς is put for ἐν; but had it here been rendered *near his Father's bosom*, it might as well have answered the design of the original, and would, I think, have been as expressive of that intimate converse and entire friendship, which the phrase implies.—Elsner here cites a passage from Plato, concerning the regard due to the authority of a *Son of God* when speaking of *his Father*; and it is indeed surprisingly apposite. Elsn. Observ. Vol. I. p. 296.

SECT. XVII. *punishment*, and a more aggravated condemnation, *who tread under foot the Son of God.* (Heb. x. 28, 29.)

Verse 18 May we ever regard him *as the Only-Begotten of the Father:* and, since he hath condescended so far, as to come down from his very *bosom* to instruct us in his nature and will, let us with all humility receive his dictates, and earnestly pray that, under his revelations and teachings, we may so *know God*, as faithfully to serve him now, and at length eternally to enjoy him.

SECT. XVIII.

Christ is baptized by John, and the Holy Spirit descends upon him in a visible form. Mark I. 9—11. Matt. III. 13, *to the end;* Luke III. 21—23.

MARK. I. 9.

SECT. XVIII. Mark I. 9. *AND it came to pass in those days, when* great numbers of *all* ranks and professions among *the* Jewish *people were baptized,*[a] *that Jesus came from* the town of *Nazareth in Galilee,*[b] where he had lived for many years in a retired manner with his parents, to the river Jordan; and applied himself *to John, that he might be baptized by him:*[c] *and was* accordingly *baptized*

MARK I. 9. AND it came to pass in those days [LUKE, when all the people were baptized] that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee [unto John, to be baptized of him] and was baptized

[a] *When all the people were baptized.*] John continued baptizing so long after this, that it is very evident the word *all* must be taken with the restriction used in the paraphrase, as it is oftentimes in other places.

[b] *Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee.*] The learned Dr. Thomas Jackson, in his elaborate examination of this context, (see his works, Vol. II. p. 515—519.) supposes, that John the Baptist, inquiring into and hearing the name of Jesus, and the place from whence he came, and comparing it in his own mind with that celebrated prophecy, Isa. xi. 1, 2, concluded, that this Jesus, or Divine Saviour, as the word may signify, (see note [d] on Mat. i. 21. p. 53.) coming from Nazareth, *the town of Rods*, as the etymology of that name imports, was *the rod out of the stem of Jesse*, upon whom *the Spirit* should *descend*, and rest like a dove on a branch. And thus he would reconcile John's address to Christ as so extraordinary a person, Mat. iii. 14, with his declaring (John i. 31, 33.) that he *knew him not* before: but this seems a very precarious solution, considering how possible it might be, that in so large a place as Nazareth there might be several persons of the name of Jesus, or Joshua, so very common among the Jews. It appears therefore much more reasonable to have recourse to the solution given in the paraphrase and note [d] on the last cited text, § 21. that he had a secret intimation given him who it was that came to be baptized by him; and all that this very ingenious writer has said, to shew the various marks by which John might *know* Christ, without supposing such a particular *revelation* as is there suggested, does but confirm me the more in the necessity of admitting it.

[c] *That he might be baptized by him.*] By this he intended to do an honour to John's ministry, and to conform himself to what he appointed to his followers: for which last reason it was, that he drank likewise of the *sacramental cup.* And this we may consider as a plain argument, that *baptism* may be administered to those who are not capable of all the purposes, for which it was designed. See Dr. Whitby's note on Mat. iii. 16.

tized of John in Jordan. [MAT. III. 13; LUKE III. 21.]

MAT. III. 14. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

by John, in Jordan, near Bethabara; (see John i. 28; § 20.

SECT. XVIII.

Now the providence of God had so ordered it, to prevent all appearance of a combination between them, that John was personally a stranger to Christ. (John i. 33.) *But* nevertheless, as soon as he saw him, he received a secret intimation from above, that this was the Messiah, upon whom the Spirit should visibly descend; (see the note on John i. 33; § 21.) And, upon this account, such was the modesty of *John*, that he was ready to decline the service, and *would have hindered him* from doing what he proposed; *and* accordingly *said* unto him, Thou art so much my superior, that *I have need to be baptized by thee*, with that far nobler baptism which thou art to administer; *and dost thou come to me* on such an occasion as this? I am confounded at the thought, and cannot but consider it as too high an honour for me. Mat. III. 14.

15 And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now; for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

And Jesus, replying, said unto him, Though it be really as thou sayest, yet do not go about to hinder me, but *permit* [*it*] *now; for*, however unable thou mayest be at present to enter into the particular reasons of it, yet, in submission to the divine appointments, it is decent for us *thus* to comply with all the duties of religion, and in this manner *it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness*: and upon this account, as it is a part of my duty to attend this institution, it is therefore a part of thine to administer it. *Then*, as John knew that it became him not to debate the matter any farther, *he permitted him* to be baptized. 15

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were open-

And after Jesus was baptized, as soon as he ascended out of the water to the bank of Jordan, *behold, the heavens were* immediately *opened*[d] *unto him*, and in a wondrous way appeared as if they had been rent asunder directly over his 16

[d] *The heavens were* immediately *opened.*] I think it plain, (as Grotius and Blackwall have observed,) that what is here intended, is to intimate, that directly on his coming up out of the water, the heavens were opened: for it must certainly appear to be a circumstance of small importance, and very little use for the evangelist to say, that *Jesus went up straightway out of the water, after he was baptized*; but, if we take it in the other way, it very fitly introduces the remarkable account of what directly followed it. There seems to be such a transposition of the word εὐθὺς, Mark i. 29; and xi. 2. See Blackwall's Sacred Classics, Vol. I. p. 89.

SECT. XVIII.

head: and at that very instant, *as he was* looking up, and *praying*[e] in a devout and holy rapture; *and* as John was also fixing his eyes upon this wonderful sight, *he saw the Spirit of God*,[f] *in a corporeal form*,[g] as a glorious and splendid appearance of fire, *descending* with a hovering motion *like a dove, and coming upon him*; as a visible token of those secret operations of that Blessed Spirit on his mind, by which, according to the intimations God had given in his word, he was anointed in a peculiar manner, and abundantly fitted for his public work. (Compare Psal. xlv. 7, and Isa. lxi. 1.)

Mat. III. 16.

ed unto him [Luke, being baptized, and praying:] and he saw the Spirit of God descending [Luke, in a bodily shape] like a dove and lighting upon him. [Mark I. 10; Luke III. 21, 22.]

Luke III. 22.

And, as a farther testimony of the Divine regard to Christ, and of the glorious dignity of his person, this was attended with a very memorable event: for, *behold*, *a* loud and awful *voice came out of heaven*, when it was thus opened, *which said*, *Thou art my beloved Son*,[h] *in thee I am well pleased*; that is, I perfectly approve thy character, and acquiesce in thee as the Great Mediator, through whom I will shew myself favourable unto sinful creatures. (Compare Isa. xlii. 1.)

Luke III. 22. And [lo] a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased. [Mat. III. 17. Mark I. 11.]

23 *And Jesus* at that time, *when* he received the baptism of John, and was *beginning* the public exercise of [*his ministry*,] was *about thirty years old*;[i] at which time he chose to quit his

23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age.

[e] *As he was praying.*] It is observable that all the three *voices from heaven*, by which the Father bore witness to Christ, were pronounced while he was *praying*, or very quickly after it. Compare Luke ix. 29—35; and John xii. 28.

[f] *He saw the Spirit of God.*] There is no question to be made, but that this wondrous sight was seen by both of them: for Mark has so expressed it, as plainly to refer the *seeing it* to Christ, and John the Baptist has in another place assured us that *he saw it*, and took particular notice of it as *the sign* he was directed to observe, as the distinguishing and certain characteristic of the Messiah. John i. 32—34. And I have therefore so expressed it in the paraphrase, as not directly to confine the sight of it to either.

[g] *In a corporeal form.*] This is the exact English of σωματικῷ εἴδει: a phrase, which might with propriety have been used, though there had not been (as most understand it,) any appearance in the shape of the animal here mentioned, but only a *lambent flame* falling from heaven *with a hovering dove-like motion*, which Dr. Scott (in his Christian Life, Vol. III. p. 66,) supposes to have been all. Dr. Owen and Grotius think it was a *bright flame* in the *shape of a dove*; and Justin Martyr, (who adds, that all Jordan shone with the reflection of the light says, that it was ἐν εἴδει περιστερᾶς: and Jerom calls it *species columbæ, the appearance of a dove*. Both these phrases are much more determinate than the original; but I chose to leave this, and many other things, in the same latitude as I find them.

[h] *Thou art my beloved Son.*] Both Mark and Luke express it thus; which inclines me to follow those copies of Matthew, which agree with them, rather than the more common reading there, *This is my beloved Son*. Εὐδόκησα properly expresses an *entire acquiescence* in him.

[i] *And Jesus, when beginning [his ministry] was about thirty years old.*] Of the age of Jesus at this time see note [b] on

retirement, being then in the full vigour of nature, and having attained the age, in which the priests used to begin their ministrations in the temple. (Compare Numb. iv. 3—47; and 1 Chron. xxiii. 3.) SECT. XVIII. Luke III. 23.

IMPROVEMENT.

LET our Lord's submitting himself to *baptism*, teach us a holy exactness and care in the observance of those positive institutions which owe their obligation merely to a divine command; for *thus it* also *becometh us to fulfil all righteousness;* lest by *breaking one of the least* of Christ's *commandments, and teaching others to do it*, we become unworthy of a part *in the kingdom of heaven.* (Mat. v. 19.) Mat. III. 15.

Jesus had *no sin* to confess or wash away, yet he was *baptised;* and God owned that ordinance so far, as to make it the season of pouring forth *the Spirit* upon him. And where can we expect this sacred effusion, but in a conscientious and humble attendance on divine appointments? 16

Let us remember, in how distinguishing a sense *Jesus* is *the Christ*, the *anointed of God*, to whom *the Father hath not given the Spirit by measure*, but hath poured it out upon him in the most abundant degree. Let us trace the workings of this *Spirit* in *Jesus*, not only as a spirit of miraculous power, but of the richest grace and holiness; earnestly praying, that this *holy unction*, may, from *Christ* our head, *descend* upon our souls! May his enlivening *Spirit* kindle its sacred flame there, with such vigour, that *many waters* may not be able to *quench it*, nor *floods* of temptation and corruption to *drown it.* Mark I. 10.

Behold God's *beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased!* As such let us honour and love him; and as such let our souls acquiesce Luke III. 22.

Luke iii. 1. p. 98.—I can recollect no sufficient authority to justify our translators in rendering ην ωσει ετων τριακοντα αρχομενος, *began to be about thirty years of age*, or was now entering on his thirtieth year. To express that sense, it should have been ην αρχομενος ειναι, &c. as Epiphanius, probably by a mistake, has quoted it.—The learned author of the Vindication of the beginning of Matthew's and Luke's gospel, extremely dissatisfied with all the common versions and explications of these words, would render them, *And Jesus was obedient*, or lived in subjection [*to his parents,*] *about thirty years:* and produces several passages from approved Greek writers, in which αρχομενος signifies *subject.* But in all those places it is used in some connection, or opposition, which determines the sense; and therefore none of them are instances parallel to this. Luke evidently uses αρχομενων, chap. xxi. 28, in the sense we suppose it to have here; and since he had before expressed *our Lord's subjection to his parents* by the word υποτασσομενος, chap. ii. 51, there is great reason to believe, he would have used the same word here, had he intended to give us the same idea. And indeed, if αρχομενος be allowed to have the signification which this accurate critic (for such he undoubtedly is,) contends for here, since there is nothing in the text to limit it, the phrase would intimate, he was *subject to none* after this time; an assertion which I should think both groundless and dangerous.—This clause of Luke has been already mentioned in another place, where it was only inserted (out of its proper order,) to complete the sentence: see Sect. 9. p. 56.

SECT. XVIII. in him, as in every respect such a *Saviour* as our wishes might have asked and our necessities required.

Luke III. 23. With what amazement should we reflect upon it, that the blessed *Jesus*, though so early ripened for the most extensive services, should live in retirement even till his *thirtieth year!* That he deferred his *ministry* so long, should teach us, not to thrust ourselves forward to public stations till we are qualified for them, and plainly discover a Divine call: that he deferred it no longer, should be an engagement to us, to avoid unnecessary delays, and to give God the prime and vigour of our life.

Our great *Master* attained not, as it seems, to the conclusion of his *thirty-fifth year*, if he so much as entered upon it; yet what glorious atchievements did he accomplish within those narrow limits of time! Happy that servant, who with any proportionable zeal dispatches the great business of life! so much the more happy, if his *sun go down at noon*; for the space that is taken from the labours of time, will be added to the rewards of eternity.

SECT. XIX.

Christ's victory over the temptations of Satan in the wilderness.
Luke IV. 1—13. Mat. IV. 1—11. Mark I. 12, 13.

LUKE IV. 1.

SECT. XIX. Luke IV. 1. *THEN Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit*, with which he had been just anointed in so extraordinary a manner, *returned from Jordan*, where he had been baptised; *and immediately* after this, *was led by the* strong impulse of that *Spirit* on his mind, *into* that desolate and solitary place, *the wilderness*;[a] *that he might* there *be* exercised, and *tempted by* the most violent assaults of *the devil*; and, by conquering him, might afford an illustrious example of heroic virtue, and lay a foundation for the encourage-

LUKE IV. 1. AND Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and [MARK immediately] was led by the Spirit [MARK the Spirit driveth him] into the wilderness [to be tempted of the devil, [MAT. IV. 1; MARK I. 12.]

[a] *Into the wilderness.*] Christ probably intended this as a devout retirement, to which he found himself strongly inclined, that he might give vent to those sacred passions which the late grand occurrences, of the *descent* of the *Spirit* upon him, and the miraculous attestation of *a voice from heaven*, had such a tendency to inspire. It seems a very groundless conjecture of Mr. Fleming (in his Christology, Vol. II. p. 315.) that he was carried through the air to mount Sinai. Mr. Maundrell's is much more probable, that it might be the *wilderness* near Jordan; which, as he, who travelled through it, assures us, is a miserable and horrid place, consisting of high barren mountains, so that it looks as if nature had suffered some violent convulsions there. (See Maundrell's Travels, p. 78.) This is the scene of the *parable* of the *good Samaritan*. (Luke x. 30.) Our Lord probably was assaulted in the northern part of it, near the sea of Galilee, because he is said here to be *returning* or going back to Nazareth, from whence he came to be baptised; Mark i. 9. p. 112.

ment and support of his people, in their future combats with that malignant adversary. SECT. XIX.

Mark I. 13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts [and in those days he did eat nothing.] LUKE IV. 2.

And he was there in the wilderness forty days: and during that time he was *tempted by Satan; and* also *was* surrounded *with* a variety of *the* most savage and voracious kinds of *wild beasts;* but they were so over-awed by his presence, that (as in the case of Daniel when in the den of lions, Dan. vi. 22.) none of them offered him the least injury:[b] *and in* all *those days he did eat nothing* at all. Mark I. 13.

Mat. IV. 2. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterwards an hungred. [LUKE IV. 2.]

And when he had thus *fasted forty days and forty nights,* as Moses the giver of the law, (Exod. xxxiv. 28.) and Elias the great restorer of it, had done before him, (1 Kings xix. 8.) having been thus far miraculously borne above the appetites of nature, *at length he* felt them, and *was* very *hungry,* but was entirely unprovided with any proper food. Mat. IV. 2.

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. [LUKE IV. 3.]

And just at that time, *the tempter coming to him*[c] in a visible form, (putting on a human appearance, as one that desired to inquire farther into the evidences of his mission,) *said, If thou art the Son of God,* in such an extraordinary manner as thou hast been declared to be, and art indeed the promised Messiah, who is expected under that character,[d] *command that these stones become loaves* [*of bread,*] to relieve thy hunger; for in such a circumstance it will undoubtedly be done. 3

4 But [Jesus] answered and said, It is

But Jesus answered, and said unto him, *It is written* in the sacred volume, (Deut. viii. 3.) 4

[b] None of them offered him the least injury.] It is strange that any should think he was during this time *hunted by the wild beasts:* this is the more improbable, as such a hurry would have been inconsistent with the design of God in leading him thither; which was, that he might be assaulted by Satan, at first probably by secret suggestions, the horror of which would be increased by such a gloomy place. *The angels* might be the instruments of intimidating the *beasts.* Could Dr. Lightfoot have proved what he asserts, that this happened in October or November, the cold would have been, as he suggests, an additional circumstance of affliction to our Lord: but it seems rather to have been in the beginning of Summer; see note [b], on Luke iii. 1. p. 98; and note [k], on Mat. iii. 4. p. 101.

[c] *The tempter coming to him.*] Our *translation,* which in its rendering of these words is not so literal as the version I have given, seems to intimate, what is not any where asserted in the sacred story, that this was the *first time* the *tempter* came unto him; a circumstance which can hardly be supposed.

[d] The promised Messiah, who is expected under that character.] That the Jews supposed the Messiah would be in a very extraordinary manner *the Son of God,* appears from comparing Mat. xiv. 33; xvi. 16; xxvi. 63; John i. 34, 49; xi. 27; xx. 31; and Acts viii. 37.

SECT. XIX. Mat. IV. 4.

" *Man shall not live by bread only, but by every* " *word proceeding out of the mouth of God,* or " by whatever he shall appoint for the preser- " vation of his life." He can therefore support me without bread, as he fed the Israelites in the wilderness;[e] and, on the other hand, even bread itself, if these stones were turned into it, could not nourish me without his blessing; which I could not expect, were I to attempt a miracle of this kind, merely in compliance with thy suggestions, without any intimation of my Father's will.

written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. [LUKE IV. 4.]

5 *Then*, as *the devil* found it was in vain that he had tempted Christ to a distrust of Providence, he was for trying to pursuade him to presumption: and to this end, he *taketh him* along with him[f] *to Jerusalem*, which, being the place where God dwelt in so distinguished a manner, was commonly called *the Holy City*;[g] *and* there he *setteth him on one of the battlements of the temple*,[h] which in some parts of it, and particularly over the porch, was so exceeding high, that one could hardly bear to look 6 down from it.[i] *And* as he stood upon the brink of this high precipice, the tempter *saith unto him, If thou art* indeed *the son of God, cast thyself down* courageously *from hence*, and mingle with those that are assembled for the worship of God, in yonder court. The sight of such a miracle will undeniably convince them of the truth of thy pretensions; and thou canst have no room to doubt of thy safety; *for* thou well knowest *it is written*, (Psal. xci. 11, 12.) " *He shall give his angels a charge concerning*

5 Then the devil taketh him up into [Jerusalem] the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple; [LUKE IV. 9.]

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down [from hence] for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee [to

[e] *As he fed the Israelites in the wilderness.*] It is to this the passage that is quoted here hath a plain reference, as it stands in the Old Testament.

[f] *Taketh him* along with him.] This is the exact English of παραλαμβανει. (See Elsner. Observ. in loc.) But whether he did, or did not *transport him through the air*, cannot, I think, be determined from this passage.

[g] *The holy city.*] This is a phrase that frequently, and very properly, is used to express Jerusalem. (Compare Neh. xi. 1; Isa. lii. 1; Dan. ix. 24; and Mat. xxii. 53. The heathen writers, in like manner, often call those cities *holy*, in which any of their deities were supposed to hold their special residence, and from whence their *oracles* were delivered. (See Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 17, 18.

[h] *One of the battlements of the temple.* Though *pinnacle* agrees very well with the etymology of the *Greek word*, yet, according to its use among us, it leads the English reader to imagine, that he stood on the *point of a spire*. The truth is, the roof of the temple was flat, and had a kind of *balustrade* round it; (see Deut. xxii. 8.) and somewhere on the edge of this *battlement* we may suppose that Satan placed Christ, in his attacking him with this temptation.

[i] Hardly bear to look down from it.] Josephus gives us this account of it, Antiq. Jud. lib. xv. cap. 11. (al. 14.) § 5. p. 781. Edit. Havercamp.

SECT. XIX.

keep thee] and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. [LUKE IV. 9. 10, 11.]

"*thee, to keep thee;*[k] *and they shall bear thee* "*up in their hands, lest thou shouldest* by any "accident *dash thy foot against a stone.*" And surely the Son of God may depend upon a promise, which seems common to all his saints. Mat. IV. 6.

7 [And] Jesus [answering] said unto him, It is written again, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. [LUKE IV. 12.]

And Jesus answering, said unto him, It is also written, to prevent the ungrateful abuse of such gracious promises as these, (Deut. vi. 16.) "*Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,*" by demanding farther evidence of what is already made sufficiently plain,[l] as my relation to God is, by the miraculous and glorious testimony he hath so lately given me.

8 Again, the devil taketh him up to an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, [in a moment of time.] [LUKE IV. 5.]

Again, the devil being resolved once more to attack him by the most dangerous temptation he could devise, *taketh him up into a mountain* in those parts, which was *exceeding high; and* from thence, *in a moment of time sheweth him,* in an artful visionary representation, *all the* most magnificent *kingdoms of the world, and* all *the* luxury, and pomp, and *glory of them;* displaying to his view one of the finest prospects that the most pleasurable and triumphant scenes could furnish out.[m] *And,* with the most egregious impudence and falsehood, *the devil said unto him, All this* extensive *power,* [*and*] *all these* splendid *things, will I give thee, and* all *the glory of them,* which thou hast now before thee; *(for it is* all *delivered to me,*[n] who am the prince of this world, *and I give it to*

8

LUKE IV. 6. And the devil said unto him, All this power [All these things] will I give thee, and the glory of them; for that is delivered unto me, and to whom-

Luke IV. 6.

[k] *A charge concerning thee, to keep thee.*] Many (after Jerom,) have observed, that Satan made his advantage of quoting scripture merely by scraps, leaving out those words, *in all thy ways.* The cause of truth, and sometimes of common sense hath suffered a great deal by those who have followed his example.

[l] By demanding farther evidence of what is already made sufficiently plain.] That this is the purport of the phrase *tempting God,* is easy to be seen, from comparing Exod xvii. 2, 7; Numb. xiv. 22; Psal. lxxviii. 18; and Psal. cvi. 14. See Limborch. Theolog. lib. v. cap. 22. § 16.

[m] One of the finest prospects that the most pleasurable and triumphant scenes could furnish out.] As Christ was probably attacked with this temptation upon some mountain in the *wilderness,* this beautiful and taking prospect that was represented to him, being set off by the horror of the place he was in, would in such a *contrast* appear peculiarly charming: see note [a], p. 116.

[n] *For it is* all *delivered to me.*] Grotius has well observed, that this contains a vile insinuation, that God had done, what none that truly understands the nature of God and the creature can suppose possible, namely, that he had parted with the government of the world out of his own hands. And we may add to this, that in the text which Christ has quoted, there is enough to overthrow that notion; since God's appropriating to himself the *worship* of all his creatures, plainly implies his universal empire and dominion over all, and the regard he has to the religious adoration and obedience of all the subjects of his kingdom. —It is remarkable that, among other things which several Heathen writers

SECT. XIX.

Luke IV. 7.

whom I please.] And great as the gift is, I am so charmed with that wisdom and magnanimity which I have now observed in thee,[o] that I propose to give it thee upon the easiest terms thou canst imagine; for all that I desire is, that thou shouldest pay me homage for it: *if therefore thou wilt* but *fall down and worship me*, upon thy making this little acknowledgment to me, *all* these things *shall be thine.*

soever I will, I give it. [MAT. IV. 9.]

7 If thou therefore wilt [fall down and] worship me, all shall be thine. [MAT. IV. 9.]

8 *Then Jesus*, moved with indignation at so blasphemous and horrid a suggestion, *answered and said unto him*, with becoming resentment and abhorrence, *Get thee hence, Satan*,[p] and begone out of my sight, for I will no longer endure thee near me: *for it is written*, as a fundamental precept of the law, (Deut. vi. 13.) "*Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and* "*him only shalt thou serve.*" It would therefore be unlawful thus to worship thee who art no other than a mere creature, even though thou wast indeed his deputy on earth; and how much more then must it be so, as thou art in reality the great avowed enemy of God and man?[q] for such, under all thy disguise, I well know thee to be.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, [Get thee hence] Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. [MAT. IV. 10.]

Luke IV. 13.

And when the devil had ended all the temptation we have given an account of, being so baffled and confounded as not to be able to present any others which seemed more likely to succeed,

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

learnt of the primitive Christians, this was one, to represent evil spirits as tempting men from their duty by views of *worldly riches and grandeur*; over which, Porphyry in particular says, they often would pretend to much more power than they really have. See Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 18, 19.

[o] I am so charmed with that—which I have now observed in thee.] This seems the most plausible view, in which the temptation could be introduced,—it is plain from the next verse, that this was the *last temptation*; but Luke makes it the *second*; whence it evidently appears that Luke did not confine himself exactly to observe *the order of time* in his story; a remark of vast importance for settling the Harmony. See note [4] on Luke i. 4, p. 22.

[p] *Get thee hence, Satan.*] The word *ὑπαγε* plainly expresses his authority over Satan, as well as his detestation of so vile a suggestion.

[q] The great avowed enemy of God and man.] This odious character is intimated in the name Satan, which our Lord gives him, by which he made it to appear he knew him, however he might seek to be disguised. If we suppose him now to have worn the form of *an angel of light*, (as 2 Cor. xi. 14.) it will make both this, and the former temptation look more plausible: for thus he might pretend, in the former, to take the charge of Christ in his fall, as one of his celestial guards; and in this, to resign him a province which God had committed to *his* administration and care. And this may be consistent with supposing, that he first appeared as *a man*, (it may be, as a hungry traveller, who pretended to ask the miracle of turning *stones* into *bread*, for his own supply,) for *angels* under the Old Testament had often worn a *human form*. Compare Gen. xviii. 2; xix. 1, 10, 16; Josh. v. 13, 14; Judg. vi. 11, 12; and xiii. 3, 8, 10.

he departed from him for a season; yet secretly meditating some future assault. (Compare John xiv. 30.) SECT. XIX.

Mat. IV. 11. Then the devil leaveth him; and behold, angels came and ministered unto him. [MARK I.—13.]

And, *then the devil having left him, behold,* a detachment of *angels came and waited upon him,*[r] furnishing him with proper supplies for his hunger, and congratulating so illustrious a victory over the prince of darkness. Mat. IV. 11.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHO can read this account without amazement, when he compares the insolence and malice of the *prince of darkness,* with the condescension and grace of the *Son of God!* Mat. IV. 1. *& seq.*

What was it that animated and emboldened *Satan* to undertake such a work? Was it the easy victory he had obtained over the *first Adam* in Paradise? or was it the remembrance of his *own fall,* from whence he arrogantly concluded, that no heart could stand against the temptations of pride and ambition? Could he, who afterwards proclaimed *Christ* to be *the Son of the Most High God,* and had perhaps but lately heard him owned as such by *a voice from heaven,* make any doubt of his Divinity? Or, if he actually believed it, could he expect to vanquish him? we may rather conclude that he did not expect it; but, mad with rage and despair, he was determined at least to worry that *Lamb of God,* which he knew he could not devour; and to vex with his hellish suggestions, that innocent and holy soul, which he knew he could never seduce. Wretched degeneracy! *How art thou fallen, O Lucifer, son of the morning!* to be thus eagerly driving on thine own repulse and disgrace!

But, on the other hand, how highly are we obliged to our Great Deliverer, who hath brought forth *meat out of the eater,* and *sweetness out of the strong?* Who can sufficiently adore thy condescension, *O blessed Jesus!* who wouldst permit thyself to be thus assaulted and led from place to place, by an *infernal spirit,* whom thou couldest in a moment have remanded back to hell, to be bound *in chains of darkness,* and overwhelmed with flaming ruin! Verse 5—8.

The *apostle* tells us, why he permitted this: it was *that, having himself suffered, being tempted, he might,* by this experience that he had of *Satan*'s subtilty, and of the strength of his temptations, contract an additional tenderness, and *be* the more

[r] *Angels came and waited upon him.*] The word διακονεω does often signify *to wait at table*; see Mat. viii. 15; Luke xvii. 8; xxii. 27; and John xii. 2.—As *one celestial spirit* might have been abundantly sufficient for the relief of our Lord's necessities, it is reasonable to suppose, that the appearance of *a number of them* upon this occasion was to do him the more illustrious honour, after this horrible combat with Satan; to which, for wise and gracious reasons, he was pleased to condescend.

SECT. XIX. inclined, as well as better *able, to succour us* when *we are tempted.* (Heb. ii. 18.) Let this embolden us to *come unto the throne of grace*, to *obtain mercy, and find grace to help in the time of need.* (Heb. iv. 16.)

Let us remember and imitate the conduct of the great *Captain of our salvation*; and, like him, let us learn to *resist Satan*, that he may *flee from us.* Like *Christ*, let us maintain such an humble dependence on the divine blessing, as never to venture out of the way of it, be the *necessity* ever so urgent; nor let us ever expose ourselves to unnecessary *danger*, in expectation of extraordinary deliverance. Like him, let us learn to *overcome the world*, and to despise all its pomps and vanities, when offered at the price of our innocence.

Verse 3, 6, 8, 9

To furnish us for such a combat, let us take *the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.* Let us not only make ourselves familiarly acquainted with the *words* of *scripture*, but let us study to enter into the true design and *meaning* of it; that so, if *Satan* should attempt to draw his artillery from thence, we may be able to guard against that most dangerous stratagem, and to answer perverted passages of *holy writ*, by others more justly applied.

4, 7, 10

Once more; when the suggestions of *Satan* grow most horrible, let us not conclude, that we are utterly abandoned by God, because we are proved by such a trial; since *Christ* himself was *tempted*, even to *worship* the infernal tyrant. But in such cases let us resolutely repel the solicitation, rather than parley with it, and say, in imitation of *our Lord*'s example, and with a dependence on his grace, *Get thee behind me, Satan.*

9, 10

If our conflict be thus maintained, the struggle will ere long be over; and *angels* who are now the spectators of the combat, will at length congratulate our victory.

11

SECT. XX.

John the Baptist being examined by the great men among the Jews, acknowledges that he was not the Christ; and refers them to one among them, whom he confesses to be vastly his superior. John I. 19—28.

JOHN I. 19.

JOHN I. 19. AND this is the record of John, when the Jews sent

SECT. XX. John 1. 19.

WE have already taken notice of the honourable testimonies that were given by John in a more general way to the Messiah in his discourses to the people, before Jesus was baptized. We shall proceed to others that were more particular, which followed after that event; *and this* that we shall now produce, *is the testimony of John, when* the sanhedrim, or

priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him, Who art thou?

grand council of *the Jews at Jerusalem, sent* some who were reckoned among the most venerable and holy men of the nation, even some of the *priests and Levites, to inquire of him,* saying, Tell us plainly, *who art thou,* that drawest such a crowd of people after thee, and pretendest to something so uncommon? SECT. XX. John I. 19.

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

And John, according to the natural plainness of his temper, presently replied to their inquiry; and with the utmost freedom, *he* most readily *acknowledged, and did not* at all affect either to *deny* or to disguise his real character; *but* in the strongest terms he solemnly *protested,* [a]*I am not the Messiah,* nor would I in the least pretend to arrogate to myself the honours which are due to none but him. 20

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

And, upon this, *they* farther *asked him, What* art thou *then* if thou art not the promised Messiah? *Art thou* the celebrated *Elijah,*[b] come down from that abode in heaven, to which he was miraculously translated, (2 Kings ii. 11.) to introduce the great and terrible day of the Lord? (Mal. iv. 5.) *And* in reply to this, *he said,* with the same plainness as before, Though it is true that I am come in the spirit and power of Elijah, yet *I am not* he. And they again inquired of him, *Art thou a prophet* of the former generation raised from the dead?[c] *And he* directly *answered, No.* 21

[a] Solemnly *protested.*] The word ωμολογησεν is the same which is rendered *acknowledged* in the former clause; but being thus repeated, its signification seems to be heightened, especially by its opposition to ουκ ηρνησατο, *he denied not.*

[b] *Art thou* the celebrated *Elijah?*] It is plain by this question, that they were strangers to the parentage of *John the Baptist.* And with regard to the reply he makes to this inquiry, there is no scruple to be made, but that *the Baptist* might justly deny that he was Elijah, as he indeed was not that prophet, though he *came in his spirit,* See Luke i. 17. *p.* 33.

[c] *Art thou a prophet* of the former generation raised from the dead?] It is necessary that this question should be understood with such a limitation, because *John the Baptist* was really a very illustrious *prophet,* as we may plainly see from what is said by Christ himself, Matth. xi. 9. And this interpretation (which is largely vindicated by Castalio) seems much preferable to that of Theophylact and Erasmus, who, because of the *article* ο προφητης, would render it as we do, *that prophet;* concluding without any proof, that the Jews understood Deut. xviii. 18, not of the Messiah himself, but of some *prophet* of considerable note, who was to introduce him: and Grotius has supposed the question that they offer to refer to Jeremiah, of whose return to life, there was a mighty rumour that prevailed among the Jews, (Compare Matth. xvi. 14.) But I can see no reason to restrain it to a particular *prophet;* and since (as Limborch well observes in his *dispute* with Orobio the Jew) that text in Deuteronomy was the clearest and strongest in all the Mosaic writings to enforce the necessity of submitting to the Messiah, it is probable John would have corrected so great a mistake, if they had put the question to him upon this presumption. The best French versions render it as I have done; and

SECT. XX. John I. 22.

Now as it only was in negatives that he had hitherto replied, *they said unto him therefore* yet once more, Tell us then plainly, *Who art thou? that we may*, in a more direct and satisfactory manner, *give an answer to them that sent us: What dost thou say concerning thyself?* And, that they might not be mistaken in his character, and might be wholly left without excuse, if they regarded not the end for
23 which he came, *he said*, *I am* (what I have frequently before declared myself to be,) *the voice of one crying* here *in the wilderness*,[q] and saying, *Make the way of the Lord* clear and *straight*, by removing every obstruction; for he is now appearing for such gracious purposes, as demand the most cheerful reception; *as Isaiah the prophet said*, in a passage which you cannot but be acquainted with. (Isa. xl. 3.)
24 *Now the messengers* that came on this errand *were* of the sect *of the Pharisees*; who, as on the one hand they professed a great regard for the prophets, and believed their existence in a future state, so on the other hand they strenuously opposed any innovations in religion, which were not warranted by the tradition of the el-
25 ders. *And* therefore, upon hearing this account that John the Baptist gave them of himself, *they asked him* again, *and said unto him* with some warmth, *Why then dost thou* take upon thee, thus to *baptize*,[r] all that appear to be awakened

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us: What sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord; as said the prophet Esaias.

24 And they which were sent, were of the Pharisees:

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest

indeed it seems to me that the word *prophet*, in the *Evangelists*, generally signifies one of those holy men, who were the messengers of God to Israel of old; which especially appears from Mark vi. 15, where *to be a prophet*, and to be *as one of the prophets*, are spoken of as distinct, which they could not be but on this interpretation: and if the *alternative* o be left out, and it be read as it is in some manuscripts and printed copies, *He is a prophet like one of the prophets*, there will be a foundation for the same remark, and *one of the prophets* must signify *one of the ancient prophets*.

[q] *I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness.*] The late Archbishop of Cambray beautifully illustrates the humility of this reply, as if this illustrious prophet had said, "Far from being the *Messiah*, "or *Elias*, or one of the *old prophets*, I "am nothing but *a voice*; a sound that, "as soon as it has expressed the thought "of which it is the sign, dies into air, "and is known no more." See Fenel. Oeuvres Philos. Vol. II. p. 193.

[r] *Why then dost thou* take upon thee thus to *baptize?*] It is not to be certainly determined from this text, whether the *baptism of proselytes* was then in use among the Jews, or not. The words indeed will make a very strong and well adapted sense, should they be understood, as if it had been said, Why is it then that thou dost institute such a *new rite* as this? But surely too they will be very proper in the other sense, if we should take them to imply, Why is it then that thou dost take upon thee, without any commission from the Sanhedrim, to administer *baptism?* and that, not only (as is usual) unto those who before this were *heathens*, but even to *the Jews?* And this, (for reasons which

Thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

by thy preaching, in token of the forgiveness of their sins; *since*, by thine own confession, *thou art neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor* even *a prophet* of lower rank raised from the dead? SECT. XX. John I. 25.

26 John answered them saying I baptize with water; but there standeth one among you whom ye know not;

And *John answered them*, by repeating the testimony he had formerly borne to the people, (Luke iii. 16. p. 106.) *saying*, *I* indeed, *baptize* you *with water; but there is one* that for some time *has stood in the midst of you*, and is now coming to be daily conversant among you, *whom* as yet *you know not* to be so eminent a person, who will administer a much more noble baptism, attended with such miraculous effects as will abundantly justify mine. And *this is he, that cometh after me*, as to the time of his appearance in the world, whom yet I have declared to have existed long before me; and *who is* therefore upon all accounts deservedly *preferred before me*, as being one whose glorious dignity is such, as that I freely own him to be vastly my superior; *of whom I am not worthy* to be employed in any office as his menial servant, not even *to unloose the latchet of his shoe*, or to untie the string with which his sandals are bound on. 26

27 He it is who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoes latchet I am not worthy to unloose. 27

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

These things passed on the other side Jordan at a place called *Bethabara*, or the house of passage; which lay near that part of the river which was miraculously dried up, that the Israelites under the command of Joshua might pass over into Canaan, (see Josh. iii. 16, and Judges xii. 6.) which was the place *where John was* now *baptizing*. 28

IMPROVEMENT.

How remarkably were the words of our blessed Redeemer fulfilled in *John*, *He that humbleth himself shall be exalted!* (Luke xviii. 14.) He declined assuming the name of any of the servants of God among the *prophets*; and yet our Lord bore testimony to him, as of a higher rank than any of the *prophets*, Verse 20—27.

it would not be proper here to enter upon at large) I take to be the more probable sense, and so suppose John's use of this ceremony in such a manner, to be a strong intimation that Jews, as well at Gentiles must become *proselytes* to the new dispensation, that was then opening to the world; and howsoever holy they imagined themselves to be, yet they all stood in absolute need of being washed from their sins; as he before had most emphatically declared. Mat. iii. 8, 9. p. 104.

SECT. XX. than whom there was *none greater among those*, that had in a natural way been *born of women*. (Luke vii. 28.)

Did *John*, this great and illustrious saint, speak of himself as *unworthy to untie* even the *sandals* of *Christ*; what reverence then do we owe him? and what reason have we to admire his condescension, that he should honour us, who are so much more *unworthy*, with the title of *his servants?*

Verse 26 Let not any, the most distinguished of that happy number, wonder if they be *unknown* by the world, and perhaps too slighted and despised; since it appears that even *Jesus* himself, not only at his first appearance *stood unknown* among the *Jews*, but afterwards was *rejected* by them, when his claim was solemnly entered, and his miracles most publicly wrought.

19, &c. Vain, and worse than vain, was this message and inquiry which when answered, was so soon overlooked and forgot. May Divine grace teach us to inquire as those that are in earnest in our search! and *then shall we know* to saving purposes, *if we* thus *follow on to know the Lord.* (Hos. vi. 3.)

SECT. XXI.

John the Baptist bears a repeated testimony to Jesus as the Lamb of God; which proves an occasion of introducing some of his disciples into an acquaintance with him. John I. 29—42.

JOHN I. 29.

SECT. XXI. *THE next day*, after *John* had returned this answer to the priests and Levites who were sent to inquire into his character and mission,

John I. 29. he *seeth Jesus*, (who was now returned from his temptation in the desert) *coming towards him; and says* to them that were near him, *Behold*, with the strictest attention and regard, that innocent and holy Person, who may properly be called *the Lamb of God*; as it is he that is the great atoning sacrifice, of which the lambs that by divine command are daily offered in the temple were intended to be types; *which* expiates and *takes away the sin*[a] *of the* whole

JOHN I. 29.

THE next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

[a] *The Lamb of God, which* expiates and *takes away sin.*] It is well observed by the author of that excellent treatise called Christ the Mediator, that this is the only sense, in which *a lamb* can be said to *take away sin*: Many suppose, this refers to the *paschal lamb*; but that was not in its chief intention so much an *expiatory*, as an *eucharistical sacrifice*. Grotius strangely enervates the force of this text, by chusing to explain it of that reformation of the lives of men, to which Christ did not only press them by the doctrine that he taught, but gave them an example of it in his death, *redeeming them* (as it is said) *from their vain conversation with his own precious blood*; (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) Whereas there is not any thing more evi-

SECT. XXI.

world, and is set forth to be a propitiation, not only for the Jews, for whom alone the sacrifices of the law were offered, but for the Gentiles too, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, may receive remission of sins. John I. 29.

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man, which is preferred before me; for he was before me;

And I now point him out, and tell you, *This is* 30
he, of whom, I formerly have *said*, That *after me there comes a man who is* to be *preferred* abundantly *before me*, as being one that is incomparably greater and more excellent than I; *for he existed* long *before me.*[b] (Compare John i. 15, 27. p. 110, 125.)

31 And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

And, till the 31
time of his appearance in a public way, *I* was a stranger to him, and *did not* personally *know him*; for it was ordered so by Providence that, notwithstanding the relation which there was between us, we were not brought up in any intimacy of acquaintance with each other;[c] *yet* in the general I was aware of his intended approach; and it was chiefly *for this end*, with a particular regard to him, that *I came* (as you see) *baptizing with water, that he might* thus *be* more remarkably *made manifest to Israel*, and might be introduced with greater solemnity.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him;

And John proceeded at the same time, while 32
Jesus was before him, and *bore* his *testimony* to him, *saying*, This must be certainly the Son of God; for I declare, that when he was baptized, *I* plainly *saw the* Holy *Spirit*, in a surprising

dent, than that the great design for which he died, was to *atone for sin*, and to exempt us from the punishment that our iniquities deserved; that, having *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*, we might have *redemption through his blood*, even *the forgiveness of our sins*. Compare Heb. ix. 26, 28, Eph. i. 7; and Col. i. 14.

[b] *For he existed before me.*] Dr. Hammond abundantly vindicates this interpretation. Had πρωτος here, as in some other places, signified *chief*, πρ, not πν, would have been joined with it and *John* the Baptist would have said *he is*, and not *he was my chief*, which would apparently have been a very flat tautology, instead of a reason; whereas *Christ's having existed before John*, though he was *born after him*, was a most convincing proof that he was a very extraordinary person, and was the strongest reason that could well have been assigned, to shew that he was worthy of their superior regard. Compare note[b] on John i. 15. p. 110.

[c] We were not brought up in any intimacy of acquaintance with each other.] This was very surprising, considering how nearly related they were to each other, and how remarkable the conception and birth of both of them had been, as well as what frequent interviews they might have had at the yearly feasts at Jerusalem. There seems to have been a particular hand of Providence, in thus preventing that acquaintance that might otherwise have grown up to an intimacy and tenderness of friendship which in the eyes of a prejudiced and censorious world might have rendered John's testimony to Christ something suspected. it is probable that both Zacharias and Elizabeth died while John was very young; and then he might soon forget Jesus, though he had seen him in his infancy.

SECT. XXI.

John i. 33.

token of his presence, *descending*, with a hovering motion *like a dove, from heaven, and it abode upon him.* *And* that you may not suspect any confederacy between us, I repeat the assurance which I but just now gave you, that *I did not* personally *know him: but* as he was approaching to me, I had a secret intimation given me,[d] that it was he, whom I should see to be distinguished by this sign; for *he that sent me to baptize with water*, as an earnest of that nobler baptism which is now soon to be expected, even that God whose messenger I am, *he said unto me* by an unquestionable revelation, This is the sign that I will give thee, that *upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending* in a corporeal and miraculous appearance, *and remaining upon him, this is he that baptizeth with the Holy*

34 *Spirit.* *And I saw* this sign with my own eyes; *and* upon this convincing evidence it is, that I *have testified* already, and still go on to testify, *that this is* really *the Son of God*, who is come into the world in a human form, to accomplish the great work of redemption and salvation; who is therefore most reverently and affectionately to be received by us, as we regard his Father's protection and favour.

35 *Again* it came to pass *on the next day*, that *John was standing* near the same place, *and two of his disciples* at that time were with him:[e]

36 *And looking stedfastly on Jesus,*[f] *as he was walking* at some little distance, *he* takes occasion to repeat his former declaration, and *says* to his disciples, that he might lead them to a due regard to Christ, *Behold the Lamb of God*, whom I before have represented as the great expiatory sacrifice for the sins of men.

37 *And when the two disciples* that were with him *heard him speak* such high and honourable things of Christ, they took such notice of it, that

33 And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

34 And I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God.

35 Again the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples:

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God.

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

[d] I had a secret intimation given me.] The supposition of this, which is so perfectly agreeable to John's prophetic character, easily reconciles this text, with John's respectful speech to Christ when he came to be baptized; (Mat. iii. 14. p. 113.) as Jansenius, and before him, Chrysostom, observed.

[e] *Two of his disciples* were with him.] It plainly appears by ver. 40, that Andrew was one of these; and perhaps John, the beloved apostle, might be the other; who being the penman of this gospel, does frequently conceal his name. Compare John xiii. 23; and xx. 2.

[f] *Looking stedfastly on Jesus.*] This seems the most exact signification of the word ἐμβλέψας, and I have thus translated it again in ver. 42.

SECT. XXI.

John I. 38.

they immediately went on and *followed Jesus*, who was then returning to a lodging which he had at a small distance from that place.[s] *And Jesus turning back, and seeing them* intent on *following* and coming after [*him*], *says to them*, not to discountenance and turn them back, but to encourage and invite them to a free converse with him, *What do you seek?* and what may be the business that you have with me? And *they said to him*, with the greatest reverence and respect, *Rabbi*, *(which being translated* from the Syriac, which was the language that was then spoken by the Jews, *is* the same with *master,)* may we have leave to ask thee, *where dost thou dwell?* for we are desirous of making thee a visit, that we may enter into some conversation with thee, which would not be so proper or convenient in this public way. And, pleased to hear of the inquiry they made, *he says unto them*. *Come* with me now, *and see* where it is I lodge; for you shall both be welcome to attend me home. And *they* most readily complied with his kind invitation, and *came and saw where he dwelt*, taking particular notice of the place; and they went in, *and continued with him* all the remainder of *that day; it being* then *about the tenth hour*, or four in the afternoon; so that they had an opportunity of spending the whole evening in conversation with him, abundantly to their delight and satisfaction.

38 Then Jesus turned and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day; for it was about the tenth hour.

Now *Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter*, who will make so considerable a figure in this history, *was one of the two* disciples *that heard John* [*speak of Jesus*] in the manner we have before related, *and followed him*. And so exceedingly was he transported with the pleasure that he found in his acquaintance with him, that he was ready to impart the joyful news to others, to whom he knew it would be welcome; and hastening to communicate it to his friends, as the most acceptable tidings he could bring them,

40 One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

41 He first findeth

[s] A lodging at a small distance from that place.] As Jesus was a person who had no attendants, and was a stranger in this country, we may conclude, that he had only some obscure and private *lodging* here; which must have been at no great distance from the place where John baptized, as may be gathered from his appearing there from day to day. And by this means he did an honour to John's ministry, and had an opportunity of receiving his testimony.

SECT. XXI. John I. 41. *he first findeth his own brother Simon*[h] *and tells him* with the greatest joy, *We* certainly *have found the* promised *Messiah; (which being translated* from the Hebrew or the Syriac tongue, *is the Christ*, or the Anointed One.)

his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, (which is, being interpreted, the Christ.)

42 *And*, that his brother Simon might be satisfied of the truth of what he told him, *he brought him unto Jesus: and Jesus looking stedfastly upon him*, as if he had read in his countenance the traces of his character, and of his future service in the church, *said*, at his coming to him, *Thou art Simon the son of Jonas;*[i] and *thou shalt* also *be called Cephas, (which* in the Greek may be expressed by Peter, and *signifies a rock*;) a name well adapted to his character, upon account of the resolute and patient firmness with which he should maintain the cause of the gospel; and which also expressed the use which should afterwards be made of him, as he should prove in subordination to Christ, one of the great foundations of the church.

42 And he brought him to Jesus: and when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas (which is, by interpretation, a stone.)

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 29 LET our faith daily behold *Jesus* under the character of *the Lamb of God*, a Lamb indeed *without blemish and without spot*; by whose *precious blood* we are *redeemed*, as by an infinitely more valuable ransom than *silver and gold*. (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) As such let us humbly apply to him to *take away our sins*, and rejoice that (as the apostle *John* elsewhere expresses it,) *he is the propitiation, not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world*; all ages and nations being interested in the benefit of his atonement. (1 John ii. 2.)

[h] *He first findeth his own brother Simon.*] This is a much more literal translation of Ευρισκει ουτος πρωτος αδελφον τον ιδιον Σιμωνα, than that of the new translation in 1727, which renders it, *The first that he found, or happened to meet with, was Peter.*—He may perhaps be called *his own brother*, to distinguish him from some other that belonged to the family, who possibly might be his brother-in-law, or was related to him only in half-blood.—Peter was so remarkable a person, that it might be proper to tell us, who was the first means of bringing him acquainted with Christ; and if John was the other disciple that is here referred to, he might mean this as an humble intimation, that Andrew's zeal was in this respect greater than his own.—We may observe here by the way, that Peter was not *the first* of Christ's disciples, (in which the Papists would have been ready to have gloried,) but that another was the means of bringing him to an acquaintance with Jesus.

[i] *Thou art Simon.*] Some have thought, that Christ intended an allusion here to his name Simon, which may signify *a hearer*, intimating the candour and impartiality with which he was willing to hear Christ's instructions; (see Dr. Clarke's note.) But I did not express this in the paraphrase, because it is not certain. Perhaps our Lord only meant to shew, that though he had never seen him before, he knew his name and his family. Compare ver. 48; and John iv. 16, 19.

Let us consider him as *anointed* by the *Holy Spirit*, and as *baptizing* his church with it; and learn, after the example of *John the Baptist*, to bear our *testimony* to him again and again, with continued steadiness and growing zeal. SECT. XXI. Ver. 33, & *seq.*

Our satisfaction in him as the great and only Saviour, will surely grow in proportion to our acquaintance with him. If Divine grace hath discovered him to us, and taught us to repose the confidence of our souls upon him, let us, like *Andrew* in the passage before us, be concerned to make him known to others; and especially to lead our nearest relatives and our most intimate friends into that acquaintance with him, which is so absolutely necessary to their eternal happiness! 39 41

Let the condescending readiness with which our blessed Redeemer accepted, and even invited the visit of these *two disciples*, engage every preacher of righteousness most willingly to give his private, as well as his public labours, and his time (valuable as that treasure is,) to the service of those who are seriously affected with the concerns of their souls, and are inquiring after the way to salvation. We are sufficiently honoured if, by any means, and by all, we may be instrumental in promoting that cause which employed the daily labours of God's incarnate Son, and at length cost him his very blood! 39

SECT. XXII.

The calling of Philip, and the interview of Christ with Nathaniel. John I. 43, *to the end.*

JOHN I. 43.

THE day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

JOHN I. 43.

THE next day after he had met with Peter, *Jesus determined to depart from thence*[a] *to Galilee*, and there to enter on his public ministry; *and* at his coming thither he *findeth Philip*, whom he intended for one of his most intimate companions, *and says unto him, Follow me*; which, being secretly influenced by his grace,[b] SECT. XXII. John I. 43.

[a] *Determined to depart from thence*; ηθελησεν εξελθειν.] The force of the word θελω seems to be something greater than our translation expresses; and there are several other texts which may suggest the same remark. (Compare Mat. xiv. 5; xix. 17: xx. 14; Luke iv. 6; xxiii. 20; John iii. 8; v. 21, 40; vii. 17; viii. 44; xvii. 24; xxi. 22; and 2 Tim. iii. 12.) Perhaps it may here intimate, that our Lord on this occasion broke through the importunity of some, who would rather have persuaded him to continue at Bethabara, for the advantage of farther testimonies from the Baptist, or to have gone to Jerusalem, where they might imagine, that his ministry would have been opened more honourably than in Galilee. Compare John vii. 3, 4.

[b] Being secretly influenced by his grace.] When we consider how suddenly some of Christ's disciples left their stated employments, to follow him, (according as we read, Mat. iv. 18—22; Luke v. 27, 28: and xix. 5, 6.) it seems reasonable to allow some singular kind of impression on their mind, (as there was in the calling of Elisha, 1 Kings xix. 19—21.) which though for the present it superseded the necessity of arguments,

SECT. XXII.

John I. 44.

he accordingly did. *Now Philip was* an inhabitant *of Bethsaida*, which was a town of Galilee on the sea of Tiberias, and was also *the city of Andrew and Peter*, who have already been particularly mentioned; and by his calling these disciples, he gave an intimation of his purpose, of making some longer stay in that country.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 And *Philip*, after he was thus become a follower of Christ, *findeth* his pious friend *Nathaniel*, who was also of Galilee, and lived in a town of it which was called Cana, (John xxi. 2.) *and says unto him, We have found him*, who has so long been earnestly expected by us, even that illustrious and extraordinary Person, *whom Moses* gave us an account of *in the law, and* whom *the prophets* also *have described*[x] in such a strong and lively manner; and with the greatest joy I am come to tell thee, I know him who he is, [*even*] *Jesus the son of Joseph*, who comes *from Nazareth*, and is undoubtedly the promised Messiah.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46 *And* when *Nathaniel* heard that he was one of Nazareth, his prejudice against the place was such, that he was ready to conclude, that Philip was mistaken; and he therefore *said unto him, Can any good thing* at all, and especially any such great and glorious blessing as this, *come out of* a place so infamous as *Nazareth*?[d] And *Philip says unto him*, Do not suffer yourself to be borne away by a vain popular prejudice; but *come and see*; converse with him yourself, and you will soon be satisfied.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Now when *Jesus saw Nathaniel coming towards him*, (though there was no personal acquaintance between them,) at the first sight of him he presently discerns what was his real character, *and says; concerning him*, so loud that he might easily hear it, *Behold* here cometh *one*

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of

yet did not exclude their attending to that afterwards, which might be necessary to defend their conduct to others.

[x] *Whom Moses—and the Prophets have described:* ον γραψε Μωσης και οι προφηται.] This is a very literal translation; for γραφω frequently is used in the same sense elsewhere, and in particular is justly rendered thus, Rom. x. 5. (Compare Josh. xviii. 9; Judg. viii. 14, and Ezra vii. 22. *Septuag.*)

[d] *A place so infamous as Nazareth.*] As Nathaniel was a native of Galilee, it appears from hence, that the Galileans themselves had but an ill opinion of Nazareth, as worse than the rest of that country; and indeed, by the figure its inhabitants make in the evangelists, they seem to have deserved it. See Luke iv. 16, 28, 29; and Mat. xiii. 54, *& seq.*

him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.

[*that is*] *truly an Israelite*, (compare Rev. iii. 9. and John viii 39.) a person that indeed deserves the honourable title of one of God's people, and is worthy of his descent from Jacob his pious ancestor, as being a plain and upright man, *in whom there is no deceit*, either towards God or man. (See Gen. xxv. 27.) SECT. XXII. John I. 47.

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.

Nathaniel, perfectly surprised at such an unexpected testimony, presently *says*, with all the natural frankness of his temper *to him*, *Whence dost thou know me*, or how canst thou at once thus undertake to answer for the most secret part of a stranger's character? *Jesus replied, and said unto him*, I am not so entirely a stranger to thy character, as thou art ready to suppose, nor do I take it merely from uncertain report; for *before Philip called thee, I saw thee when thou wast* alone *under the fig-tree*;[e] and as I was present in Spirit to observe what passed in that secret retirement, I know how well thou deservest the testimony, which I have now borne to thine integrity. 48

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel.

Nathaniel was so struck with this express reference to what he knew none could be witness to, but God and his own conscience, that all his prejudices were at once removed; and he immediately *replied* to Christ, *and says*, with all that openness and candour that was so natural *to him*, *Rabbi*, from this one circumstance I cannot but believe all that my friend hath told me concerning thee; and therefore I not only honour thee as a wise and holy teacher, but am convinced that *thou art the son of God*; yea, that *thou art* the promised Messiah, whom we so earnestly have been expecting as *the King of Israel*; for surely such Divine knowledge can be lodged in no meaner person.[f] 49

[e] *When thou wast under the fig-tree.*] I see no reason at all to think, with Heinsius, that the conviction produced by these words in the mind of Nathaniel proceeded from the allusion he perceived them to bear to Zech. iii. 10. *In that day ye shall call every man his neighbour under the vine, and under the fig tree.* It was Christ's saying that he *saw him there*, that struck his mind in so powerful a manner; and it is very probable, that he was then employed in some secret devout meditations. See Dr. Evans's Christian Temper, Vol. II. p. 342.

[f] *Such Divine knowledge can be lodged in no meaner person.*] Just thus the *woman of Samaria* argued, John iv. 29. *Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?* which plainly intimates, that they supposed the Messiah would be endowed with the most perfect knowledge, and have the

SECT. XXII.

John I. 50.

And *Jesus* upon this *replied, and said unto him, Dost thou believe* me to be the promised Messiah, and the Son of God, merely *because I told thee*, that *I saw thee under the fig-tree? Thou*, who discoverest so honest and teachable a temper, *shalt see* much *greater things than* 51 *these* to prove it. *And he* accordingly proceeds and *says*, not only *unto him*, but unto all that were then present with him, *Verily, verily, I say unto you*,[g] and solemnly declare it as a most certain truth, to be regarded with the most diligent attention, and received as coming from the mouth of one who is truth itself, That *from this time you shall see* such a surprising train of miracles[h] wrought by me, in the whole course of my succeeding ministry, that it shall seem as if *heaven* was *opened, and* all *the angels of God* were continually (as they appeared in vision to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 12.) *ascending and descending*[i] [*to wait*] *upon the son of man*, and to receive and execute his orders: and thus you will be furnished with a most convincing proof that, humble as the form of my present appearance

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

gift of prophecy in the highest degree.—There was a great deal of courage in Nathaniel's making such a declaration, if it was before a mixed company; for Christ's assuming the title of *the son of God*, was afterwards interpreted to be no less than blasphemy. John x. 36; and xix. 7.

[g] *Verily, verily, I say unto you*; αμην αμην, λεγω υμιν.] There is no doubt, but that these words are to be taken for a solemn affirmation; in which it is observable, that John has constantly repeated the *amen*, while it is only mentioned once by the other evangelists. And this we may suppose him to have done, either to excite the greater attention, or in a more emphatical and stronger manner to assert the *truth*, not only of the thing affirmed, but of the person that affirms it. For as *amen* in Hebrew signifies *truth*, (Isa. lxv. 16.) so Christ, as being *the true and faithful witness*, is called *the Amen*. (Rev. iii. 14.) This repeated asseveration therefore may be considered as an intimation to us, not only that the saying unto which it is prefixed *is true*, but that we should regard it as proceeding from *the true and faithful Witness*. See Dr. Lightfoot's Harmony, and Hor. Heb. in loc.

[h] *From this time you shall see* a train of miracles.] Accordingly within *three days* one glorious miracle was performed by Christ at Cana of Galilee; which being the town to which Nathaniel belonged, there is great reason to believe he was present with the rest of Christ's disciples at it. Compare John ii. 2, 11. § 23.

[i] *The angels of God ascending and descending.*] If Nathaniel was, as some have thought, the person afterwards called Bartholomew, and made an apostle (see Lightfoot's Hor. Hebra. on Matth. x. 3.) he must regard the vision of *angels* attending *Christ's ascension*, as a glorious accomplishment of these words; as his final appearance at the day of *judgment, when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him*, will yet more eminently be. Compare Matth. xxvi. 64, where απ' αρτι so plainly signifies *hereafter*, that I much question, whether it might not justly have been rendered so here; but where I am dubious, I always chuse the more extensive sense, in which (as here,) the more limited is generally comprehended.

is,[k] I am indeed the illustrious Person foretold under that title, and am intended for that glorious throne, around which the highest angels shall account it their honour to appear as humble attendants, when the whole world shall be convened before it. SECT. XXII. John I. 51.

IMPROVEMENT.

How cautiously should we guard against popular prejudices, which possessed so honest a heart as that of *Nathaniel*, and led him to suspect, that the blessed *Jesus* himself was an impostor, and that *no good* could be expected from him, because he had been brought up at *Nazareth!* But his integrity prevailed over that foolish bias, and laid him open to the conviction of evidence, which a candid inquirer will always be glad to admit, even when it brings the most unexpected discovery. Verse 46

How amiable is the character here given of *Nathaniel!* *An Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile!* May the attainment of so excellent a character, and a resemblance to him in it, be the daily aim and emulation of all who have the honour to be called into the *Israel of God!* 47

A constant intercourse with God in secret devotion will be a happy expression of one branch of this sincerity, and an effectual means of promoting the rest. Let it therefore be our care, that the eye of him that *seeth in secret*, may often behold us in religious retirement, pouring out our souls before God, and humbly consecrating them to his service. The day will come, when those scenes of duty which were most cautiously concealed, shall be commemorated with public honour; and when he who now discerns them, and is a constant witness to the most *private* exercises of the *closet*, *will reward them openly.* (Matth. vi. 6.) 48 51

Happy were those who *saw the miracles* performed by the *Son of man* while he was here on earth! and happy those favourite spirits of heaven which were *ascending and descending* as *ministers of his to do his pleasure!* But in some degree yet happier are they *who, having not seen, have believed*; John xx. 29. As their *faith* is peculiarly acceptable, it shall ere long be

[k] Humble as the form of my present appearance is.] Though it be very true, as Dr. Sykes has excellently proved at large, that the phrase *Son of man* does generally refer to the glorious *kingdom*, over which Christ was to preside, according to the prophecies of Daniel, yet I think it equally evident, that it is originally used in the Old Testament, in a sense that carries something of humiliation in it. See Job xxv. 6; Psal. viii. 4; cxliv. 3; Isa. li. 12; and especially Psal. lxii. 9; where we justly translate BENEI ADAM *men of low degree*. A multitude of texts, as well as this before us, appear with great advantage, when this remark is attended to; though Le Clerc cannot by any means be vindicated in confining his interpretation so entirely to this latter view.

SECT. XXII. turned into *sight*. They shall behold much *greater things* than ever were seen below, and more extraordinary manifestations of his glory than they can now conceive; and, being brought with all his people to surround his throne, shall join in those nobler services, which attendant *angels* render him above.

SECT. XXIII.

Christ attends a Marriage-feast at Cana in Galilee, and miraculously changes water into wine. John II. 1—11.

JOHN II. 1.

SECT. XXIII. John II. 1. NOW *the third day* after Christ's coming into Galilee, and discoursing there with Nathaniel, in the manner we have related above, *there was a marriage at Cana*, a town *in Galilee*,[a] which originally belonged to the tribe of Asher, (Josh. xix. 28.) *and* Mary *the mother of Jesus was there*;[b] it being the marriage of a near relation, or an intimate friend of her's.

JOHN II. 1. AND the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there.

2 *And Jesus, and* those of *his disciples* that were with him, (namely the two disciples that had followed him from the banks of Jordan, with Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel,) being known to be in the neighbourhood, *were invited to the marriage*: and Jesus, not affecting the austerities which became the character and ministry of John the Baptist, freely accepted of the invitation, and favoured them with his instructive presence.

2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

3 Now, as it was known that Jesus would be present at the feast, this, in conjunction with the events which had lately arisen, occasioned a

3 And when they wanted wine, the mo-

[a] *Cana, a town in Galilee.*] It lay toward the southern part of the land of Asher, (Josh. xix. 28.) and might be called *Cana in Galilee*, to distinguish it from another town of that name in Celosyria, mentioned by Josephus. Antiq. Jud. lib. xv. cap. 5. (al. 6.) sect. 1. p. 751. Havercamp.

[b] *The mother of Jesus was there.*] Some have supposed this marriage to be celebrated at the house of Cleopas or Alpheus, whose wife was sister to the mother of our Lord, (John xix. 25.) and one of whose sons was *Simon the Canaanite*, whom some have thought to be so called, from his being an inhabitant of this Cana. (Mark iii. 18.) And this may be considered as the more probable, as Mary was not only present at the feast, but was concerned about supplying them with wine; and when the feast was over, we are told at ver. 12, that Jesus was attended at his leaving Cana, not only with his own disciples, but with his brethren, or his nearest kinsmen, who probably came hither as relations, to be present at the marriage.—As Mary here is spoken of alone, it may be reasonable to conclude, that Joseph was now dead, and that he lived not to the time when Jesus entered on his public ministry, especially as he is no where mentioned in the gospel afterwards. See Dr. Lightfoot's Harmony, in loc.

SECT. XXIII.

John II. 3.

ther of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

greater resort of company than was expected; *and when the wine* provided for the entertainment of the guests *fell short, the mother of Jesus*, who either had seen some of his miracles in private, or received from him some hint of his intention, now[c] thought proper to inform him of it, and *says unto him*, Son, dost thou observe, *they have no wine* to carry on the feast?

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

4 But *Jesus*, not approving it that she should take upon her to direct him in the exercise of his miraculous power, *says* freely *to her*, with an air of serious rebuke, and in a plainness of language suited to the simplicity of those ages and countries, *O woman*,[d] *what hast thou to do with me*,[e] thus to direct me how, and when, my miracles are to be wrought? Let me now say it once for all, this is a thing that does not lie within thy proper sphere; and in particular, for what is now proposed, *my time* of doing it *is not yet come*,[f] but it is best to wait a little

[c] *Either had seen some of his miracles in private, or received some hint, &c.*] Without supposing the one, or the other of these, one can hardly imagine, why she should thus apply to him on this occasion. For she could scarce suppose, he had money to buy any large quantity; nor would it have been so proper to have done it, if he had, lest it should have been interpreted as an affront to the bridegroom. But the supply that she expected from him, was by his working of a *miracle*; and it is plain that, notwithstanding the rebuke she justly met with, yet she had still a view to this, by her direction to the servants afterwards, ver. 5. to do whatever he should order them.

[d] *O Woman.*] We have no reason to conclude, that there was any rudeness in his addressing to his mother thus. For though indeed it is a manner of expression, that is very unusual among us, to call a person *woman*, when we are speaking to her, if she be one to whom we think that any respect is due; yet some of the politest writers of antiquity make the most well-bred and accomplished princes use it, in their addressing unto ladies of the highest quality; and even servants too are sometimes represented as speaking to their mistresses in the same language. There are some instances of this referred to in Blackwall's Sacred Classics, Vol. I. p. 206; to which many more might easily be added.

[e] *What hast thou to do with me?*] Some have thought, τι εμοι και σοι, might be rendered, *What is that to me and thee?* "What does it signify to us, or what concern is it of ours, if they want wine?" But Jesus was of so benevolent a temper, and Mary seems to be so far concerned as a relation, that it does not in this sense appear to be so proper a reply. It seems rather to be intended as a rebuke to Mary; and it was surely expedient she should know, that Jesus was not upon such occasions to be directed by her. And nothing is more evident, than that the phrase in other places has the meaning that our version gives it. See Mat. viii. 29; and Judges xi. 12; 2 Sam. xvi. 10; 1 Kings xvii. 18; 2 Kings iii. 13; and ix. 19. Septuag.

[f] *My time is not yet come.*] Some are for adding a note of interrogation here, (as Gregory Nyssen does,) and so would render it, *is not my time yet come?* As if he had said, "Am I not old enough to "know when to work *miracles?* and now "that I have entered on my public ministry, *is it not time* that I should be "exempt from thine authority, and "should be left to govern my own ac"tions without any direction?" But I conceive the sense in which it is generally taken, to be more natural and easy: and I would rather choose to understand it of the *time*, when he intended to perform *this miracle*, for which the proper moment, though very near, was not yet

SECT. XXIII.

longer, and leave it to my conduct to determine, when it will be the fittest and the most convenient season for me to interpose.

John II. 5.

In this *his mother* readily acquiesced, as conscious to herself that she had been over hasty in the proposal; but yet, as she inferred from his answer, that he intended them some extraordinary supply, she *says unto the servants*, with some degree of authority, as being in part concerned in managing the feast, *Whatever he shall order you*, see that you carefully *do it*; for he may have reasons for it, beyond what you imagine.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do *it*.

6 *Now there were set there*, near the room in which the feast was kept, *six water-pots*, or jars *of stone*, from whence the water might be taken that was made use of by the guests to wash their hands and feet, and that was necessary for the washing of the cups and other vessels that were used at table, *according to the Jewish custom of purifying*, which in some instances was grown to such a superstitious nicety,[g] as to require a considerable quantity of water to be ready upon such occasions: these jars were therefore of a considerable bigness, *containing each of them* 7 *two or three measures*.[h] And *Jesus* chusing, for wise reasons, to make use of these[i] rather

6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

7 Jesus saith unto

quite come; than to refer it in a more general way to the *time* of his *doing miracles in public*, or more particularly to restrain it to the *time* of his *sufferings*, which Christ indeed has elsewhere called *his hour*, and which Mr. L'Enfant supposes him here to intimate, that he would not anticipate by provoking the Jews too soon; for thus it would have implied a denial of his mother's request, which it is plain from ver. 5, she did not apprehend, and which the event shews, that Christ did not design.

[g] Was grown to such a superstitious nicety.] Besides the *purifications* that were appointed by the law of God, there was a multitude of others that were then practised in compliance with the tradition of the elders. Compare Mark vii. 3, 4; and see Godwin's Moses and Aaron, lib. iii. cap. 11. § 4.

[h] *Two or three measures.*] The measures of the ancients are so very uncertain that it is hardly possible to determine the exact content of these vessels. Some have computed them to contain about two or three hogsheads; and it is rendered so in our translation, as to make them contain above a hundred gallons. But it is hardly probable the vessels were so large; and as the word μετρητας signifies no more than measures, it is much better we should leave it as we find it, unless the quantity could be determined with more certainty. It seems most probable that, as the Jewish bath was the most common measure that was used in liquids, this is the quantity designed, where measures are expressed without any limitation. And as the Jewish bath is reckoned to contain four gallons and a half, the content of these vessels, if they are computed only at two measures each, will amount to no less than fifty-four gallons, which may be reckoned a sufficient quantity. See Dr. Lightfoot's Harmony, in loc. and Godwin's Moses and Aaron, lib. vi. cap. 9. *ad fin.*

[i] Chusing to make use of these.] Jesus might rather chuse to make use of these *large vessels*, thus to add to the dignity of

them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

than the vessels in which the wine had before been contained, after some convenient pause, that the failing of the wine might be the more observed, goes to the servants that were waiting, and *says to them, Fill* up *those jars with water*, *And they filled them up to the very brim. And*, having presently transformed the water by his Divine power into excellent wine, *he says unto them, Now draw* some of it *out, and carry it to the president of the feast. And*, in obedience to the orders Jesus gave them, *they carried* [*it*] to him.

SECT. XXIII. John II. 7.

8 And he said unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bear *it*.

8

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

Now when the president of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it came, (though the servants that drew the water very well *knew)*, observing that it had a finer flavour than any they had drank before, *the president of the feast calls for the bridegroom*, at whose expence he reckoned that this wine had been provided; *And says unto him*,

9

10

10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

thou hast acted to-day in a very uncommon manner, for *every man* that makes a feast *first sets out the good wine, and when they have drank plentifully*,[k] so that their taste is not so delicate as before, *then* brings out *that which is worse*; [*but*] *thou hast kept the good wine until now*, and towards the conclusion of the feast surprisest us with what is much better than we have yet tasted. This naturally gave the bridegroom an opportunity of declaring that he knew nothing of this new supply; which occasioned an examination of the servants, and so a discovery of what Christ had done in it.

the *miracle*, by the liberal quantity of *wine* produced, which we have no reason to believe was all drank that day. If the feast, as was usual, lasted several days, (Gen. xxix. 27, 28; and Judg. xiv. 12—17,) a considerable expence might by this means be saved, and an equivalent given for the additional charge of entertaining so many of his disciples. Not to say, that this would prevent any suspicion, that the tincture, or taste of the *water* might be derived from any remainder of *wine* in the vessels; for indeed the goodness of the wine thus made, would be sufficient to obviate such a thought.

excess, yet it would be very unjust and absurd to suppose, that it implies here, that these guests had already transgressed the rules of temperance. None can seriously imagine the evangelist so destitute of common sense, as to represent Christ, as *displaying his glory*, by miraculously furnishing the company with wine to prolong a drunken revel. It is much more reasonable to conclude, that it signifies here, (as it does in Gen. xliii. 34; Cant. v. 1; and Hag. i. 6. Septuag.) only *to drink so freely*, as innocently to exhilarate the spirits. And even this perhaps might only be the case of some of them, and particularly not of those who, drawn by a desire to converse with Jesus, might be but lately come in.

[k] *When they have drank plentifully.*] Though μεθυειν often signifies *to drink to*

SECT. XXIII.

John II. 11.

This was the *beginning of* his public *miracles*,[1] which *Jesus wrought* (as we have now related) *in Cana of Galilee, and* thereby *manifested his glory*; and that in such an illustrious manner that *his disciples believed on him* more stedfastly than before, as the fact was so certain and so remarkable.

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

IMPROVEMENT.

WE have here *the first* of *Christ's public miracles*, which we find was not wrought till about his *thirtieth year*. How much sooner could he have glorified himself, and amazed the world by the display of his Divine power? But he waited his Father's call, and the delay added at length to the lustre of his works.

Verse 1 It was performed to grace *a nuptial solemnity*: and who doth not see, that it was in effect a testimony borne to the honour and purity of that happy state, on which so much of the comfort of the present generation, and the existence of the future, regularly depends?

2 How happy were these *guests* while *Jesus* was among them! and how condescending did he appear, in making one on the occasion! His social and obliging temper should sweeten ours, and be a lesson to his followers, that they avoid every thing sour and morose, and do not censure others for innocent liberties, at proper seasons of festivity and joy

3, 4 If *his mother* met with so just a rebuke, for attempting to *direct* his administrations in the days of his flesh, how absurd is it for any to address her, as if she had a right to *command him* on the throne of his glory! And how indecent for us, to direct his supreme wisdom as to the time and manner in which he shall appear for us, in any of the exigencies of life!

5 Her submission and faith manifested on this occasion are truly amiable: and with this we have surely reason to admire the benignity and generosity of *Christ* in this *miracle* before us; who consulted the pleasure and entertainment, as well as the necessity of his followers; and by this abundant supply amply repaid any extraordinary expence which he might have occasioned to the family.

7, 8 How easily could he, who thus *turned water into wine*, have transformed every entertainment of a common table into the

[1] *This beginning of* his public *miracles.*] This interpretation seems much preferable to that of Grotius, who only supposes that this was the *first miracle* wrought at Cana, another being afterwards mentioned (Jo. iv. 46, § 31.) for it is plain, there must have been a long series of *miracles* wrought here, to justify such a manner of speaking, which doth not at all appear to have been the case. It rather seems to be here represented only as *the first* of his *public miracles*; for it seems probable, that the necessities of the family might sometimes have engaged him to have done something miraculous for its relief *in private*. See note [c], p. 137.

greatest delicacies, and have regaled himself daily with royal dainties? But, far superior to such animal gratifications, he chose the severities of a much plainer life. Blessed *Jesus!* who can say whether thou art greater in what thou didst, or in what thou didst not do? May none of us thy followers be too intent on indulging our taste, or any of our other senses; but pursuing those intellectual and devotional pleasures which were *thy meat* and *thy drink* on earth, may we wait for that *good wine* which thou reservest for thy people *to the last*, and for those richer dainties with which thou wilt feast those who shall *drink it with thee in thy father's kingdom!* (Mat. xxvi. 29.) SECT. XXIII.

SECT. XXIV.

Our Lord celebrates the first passover of his public ministry at Jerusalem; and vindicates the outer court of the temple from the profanation of those that bought and sold there. John II. 12, *to the end.*

JOHN II. 12.

JOHN II. 12. AFTER this, he went down to Capernaum, he and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples; and they continued there not many days.

NOW, *after* Jesus had attended at *this* marriage, where he miraculously turned the water into wine, *he and his mother, and his brethren*, (or his near relations,) *and his disciples*, who were now ready to attend him wheresoever he should go, *went down* from Cana *to Capernaum*, a city that lay near the north part of the sea of Galilee, on the south border of the land of Naphtali: *and* at this time the stay they made was but short, for *they continued there not many days*. *And* the reason of their leaving it so soon was, that *the passover of the Jews drew near*,[a] when it was ordered by the law of SECT. XXIV. John II. 12. 13

13 And the Jews' passover was at hand,

[a] *The passover of the Jews drew near.*] As the evangelists have not expressly determined the number of passovers, which happened between the baptism and death of Christ, or during the course of his public ministry, so it is well known, that learned men have been much divided in their opinions about them. By far the greater part have supposed there were *four*; reckoning this the first; the *feast* mentioned, John v. 1. the second; the *passover* spoken of, John vi. 4, as the third; and that at which Christ suffered, the *fourth*. But there are others of a different opinion.—The celebrated Sir Isaac Newton reckons *five*: the first, this which is now before us; the second, according to him, happened four months after Christ's discourse with the woman of Samaria, John iv. 35; the third, a few days before the story of the *disciples rubbing the ears of corn*, Luke vi. 1; the fourth, a little after the *feeding of the five thousand*; and the last, at the time of our Lord's *crucifixion*. The reasons for this the reader will find at large, in Sir Isaac Newton's Observat. on Proph. Part I. chap. 11; and the most considerable of them will be touched upon in their proper places.—Mr. Manne has with great learning and ingenuity attempted to revive a long exploded notion, that *Christ's ministry continued but sixteen months*; (see Manne's second Dissertation, p. 146, & *seq.*) so that there were but *two passovers* during the whole course of it. Mr.

SECT. XXIV. John II. 13.

Moses, that all the males should appear before the Lord; (Exod. xxiii. 17; and Deut. xvi. 16.) *and* therefore *Jesus*, who maintained a religious regard to the ceremonial, as well as the moral part of the law, *went up to Jerusalem* to worship at the temple.

and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

14 *And*, at his coming thither, *he found in the* outer court and cloysters of the *temple*, *those that*, under a pretence of accommodating such as came to worship there with proper sacrifices, *sold oxen, and sheep, and doves*;[b] *and* he also saw there *the money changers sitting* at their tables, who, for a certain profit, changed any foreign coin into that which was current, and larger pieces of money into half shekels, which were on some occasions to be paid into the sacred treasury. (Exod. xxx. 15.) Now, at the sight of this, Jesus was moved with a just indignation, to think that so sacred a place, honoured with such peculiar tokens of the Divine presence, should be profaned in this audacious manner, and so great an affront be put on the devout Gentiles, in whose court this market was kept; *and* therefore, *having made a whip of* the *small cords*, (with which they were used to tie the beasts to some rings fixed in the pavement for that purpose,) *he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen,* which they had brought into it; *and* he also *poured out the money of the exchangers, and overturned the tables* at which they were sitting. *And* he *said to them that sold doves, Take* all *these things away from hence* directly; [*and*] *do not*, for shame, *make my Father's house*, by such scandalous practices as these, *an house of* public *traffic*, and turn it to a common market-place, or exchange. Now by his saying thus, he openly

14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money, sitting:

15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

Whiston's reasoning against this hypothesis, in the sixth of his late dissertations appears to me unanswerable. For he there shews that if this was true, Christ must have travelled on an average near *ten miles a day* during the course of his ministry. Besides, the transpositions in scripture which this would introduce, seem very unwarrantable and dangerous; and, among other difficulties, it is none of the least, that Mr. Manne is obliged to suppose, that Christ only *purged the temple*, at his *last passover*, and consequently that St. John has misplaced this story; though ver. 24 of this chapter, and ver. 22, 23, 24, of the next (§ 27,) afford such strong arguments to the contrary. Compare note [c] and note [m] of this section.

[b] *Sold oxen, and sheep, and doves.*] There must have been a grand market for these animals at such times; for Josephus tells us, that no less than 256,500 victims were offered at *one passover*; see Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. vi. cap. 9. (al. vii. 17; § 3. p. 399.) Edit. Havercamp.

proclaimed that God was his Father,[c] and made such a declaration of his divine mission, as could not but be greatly observed by the multitude. *And his disciples*, when they saw so meek a person in such an unusual transport of just displeasure, *remembered that it was written* of David,[d] in words which well expressed the character of Christ on this occasion, (Psal. lxix. 9.) "*The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up*;" as if it were said, A regard for the honour of thy sanctuary, like a secret flame glowing in my bosom, preys upon my spirits, and would have consumed me had I not given it vent. SECT. XXIV. John II. 17.

17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

A fact so public and remarkable as this, could not but immediately come to the knowledge of the priests and rulers of *the Jews*,[e] whose supreme council, sat in a magnificent chamber 18

18 Then answered the Jews, and

[c] He openly proclaimed that God was his Father.] The most considerable argument which Mr. Manne has brought to prove, that this *expulsion of the merchants* from the *temple* happened only in *our Lord's last passover*, and consequently that it is here *transposed*, is, that such an open declaration, that *the Temple* was *his Father's house*, would have put him too much into the power of his enemies, and would have been inconsistent with the prudent reserve, which Christ kept on this head, (see Manne's Dissert. p. 179, 180, and compare Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity, p. 91, *&c. seq.* as well as with the reflection of his brethren; John vii. 3. *&c. seq.* the notes on which place in sect. 98. may be consulted here.)—But, in reply to this objection, I would beg leave to observe, (1) That for Jesus to call the temple *his Father's house*, did not amount to an express declaration that he was the Messiah; since the Jews in general spake of God as *their Father*. John viii. 41. (See John x. 24, 25. with the note there, sect. 134.) And, (2.) That though in the circumstances that here attended it, there was an oblique intimation of something extraordinary, it might not be so dangerous now as afterwards; because *our Lord* not having opened the *spiritual* nature of his *kingdom*, or as yet rendered himself obnoxious to the Pharisees by such just invectives as he afterwards used, they who expected the Messiah to appear about this time, and longed for his appearance, might be inclinable for a while to wait the issue of Christ's pretensions, and so much the rather, as he now wrought some wonderful miracles. (Compare ver. 23 and chap. iii. 2.) Accordingly we find in the beginning of the next chapter one of the chief among the Pharisees comes privately to confer with Christ in a very respectable manner. It seems necessary to acquiesce in these solutions, because the conference which refers to the miracles wrought at this feast, is expressly said to have been, before John the Baptist was imprisoned. Compare John iii. 22—24; sect. 27.

[d] *Remembered that it was written* of David.] That these words were originally spoken of David, and not of Christ, is plain from the *fifth verse* of the lxixth Psalm: *O God, thou knowest my foolishness, and my sins are not hid from thee*; which cannot be applied to Christ. Abundance of other scriptures are quoted, with such a beautiful accommodation as this.

[e] Rulers of *the Jews*.] It seems most probable, that the Jews here mentioned were *rulers*, because we know that the great assembly of Jewish rulers (that is, *the sanhedrim*,) sat in the temple, and that the chief of them often attended public worship there. This action of Christ (in *driving out the buyers and sellers*,) must undoubtedly come to their knowledge; and as their office would seem to authorize them to call him to an account, we are sure their prejudices against him would incline them to do it.

SECT. XXIV.

John II. 18.

belonging to the temple: [f] some of them *therefore*, when they heard of it, *answered and said unto him*, By what authority dost thou thus take upon thee to reform what is amiss here, and *what sign dost thou shew us, seeing that thou dost these things*, to prove thy having a Divine commission, since it is certain thou hast none from the government? *Jesus answered and said unto them*, You shall not want convincing evidence, that I have an authority far superior to what man can give me; for if you *demolish this temple*, I promise *and* assure you, *I will raise it up again in three days.* [g] *The Jews then said* unto him, in proud derision and contempt of what they did not understand, *This temple hath been* no less than *six and forty years building*, [h] (for it is now so long, since Herod began to repair it), and notwithstanding many thousand men have been employed upon it, it is not yet

said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

[f] *A magnificent chamber belonging to the temple.*] This fine *rotunda* was called, from its beautiful pavement, *Lishcath-Haggazith*, and stood on the wall of the temple, part of it within, and part of it without its sacred precincts. See Calmet's Dictionary at the word Sanhedrim; Lightfoot's Description of the Temple, chap. 9; and Witsii. Miscell. Sacr. lib. i. Diss. iii. § 66.

[g] *Demolish this temple, and I will raise it up in three days.*] It is most evident, that Christ intended nothing more in these words, than the paraphrase expresses, and did not mean to *command* them to *demolish the temple*; though his enemies indeed did, some years after, misrepresent this saying, as if he had intimated a purpose of doing it himself. Compare Mark xiv. 58; sect. 185.

[h] *This temple hath been six and forty years building.*] Mr. Whiston (in his View of the Harmony, p. 143.) would render it, *Forty and six years hath this temple been building*: but as it would have been absurd to argue from the time since the temple was built to the time it would require to rebuild it, this sense must certainly be wrong; and Dr. Lightfoot has well shewn, that the word ωκοδομηθη may signify (as we render it,) it hath been so long building. Hor. Hebr. in loc.—Mr. Fleming's calculation, (in his Christology, Vol. II. p. 366—371) to prove that the *second temple* was *forty six years building*, is not only very precarious, but also very unnecessary; for the words refer to the time since Herod began to rebuild it, which he first proposed to the people in the eighteenth year of his reign (Joseph Antiq. Jud. lib. xv. cap. 11 (al. 14) § 1. Havercamp); and though he finished what he proposed in eight or nine years, it seems, (as Dr. Lightfoot and Dr. Lardner have judiciously observed,) that the Jews still went on improving and adorning it: for long after this, under the government of Florus, (about the year of Christ 65,) Josephus speaks of the temple being finished, and the workmen dismissed: so that it seems, they were at work upon it all the time of Christ's ministry and life. Compare John viii. 59; sect. 105; John x. 31; sect. 134; and see Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xx. cap. 9. (al. 8.) § 7. p. 978; and Lardner's Credib. Part I. Vol. I. p. 534—539: and Vol. II. p. 856. 860.)—Now, as the eighteenth year of Herod's reign from the death of Antigonus began some time in A. U. C. 734, and his proposals to rebuild the temple might then be made to the Jews at the feast of tabernacles, it will from thence be but a few months more than *forty-six years* to the *passover*, A. U. 781, Or, since a year or more might probably be spent in preparing for the work before he actually began it, it may thus be brought down to A. U. 782 or 783, which is the lowest time to which this *passover* can be referred.

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John II. 21.

entirely finished; *and wilt thou* undertake to *raise it up in three days?* None certainly will be foolish enough, to pull it down, to try the experiment. *But* they were quite mistaken in the sense of what he said; for what they understood him to have spoken of the temple at Jerusalem, *he spake of the* much more sacred *temple of his* own *body*, in which the Deity dwelt, in a far nobler manner than in their holy place; (Col. ii. 9.) and he might give some intimation of it in the gesture that he used in speaking. *When therefore he was risen from* 22 *the dead*, just on the third day after his crucifixion, *his disciples remembered that he had said this to them; and they* yet more firmly *believed the scripture*, in all its prophecies concerning the Messiah's kingdom, *and* their faith in him was confirmed by *the word which Jesus had spoken*; for such a wonderful event as the resurrection of Christ, considered in its connection with this solemn prediction,[l] justly appeared as the fullest conceivable proof of his Divine mission.

21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

And while he was at the passover in Jerusa- 23 *lem, on the feast-day, many* of the Jews who were then present there, *seeing the miracles which he wrought,*[k] *believed in him,*[l] and were inwardly persuaded, that he was the Messiah; *But Jesus did not* care to *trust himself to them,*[m] 24 so far as to acknowledge it expressly, that he was actually the promised Messiah; and, by confessing who he was, to put himself into their power, *because he knew* them *all.* *And had no* 25 *need that any one should testify*, or tell him any thing of the character *of* any *man*, though ever so much a stranger to him: *for he* himself, by an immediate and unerring penetration, *knew what was in* the heart of every *man*; and

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*,

25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

[l] The resurrection of Christ, considered in its connection with this solemn prediction.] This important thought is set in a very strong light by Dr. Jenkins, in his Reasonableness of Christianity, Vol. I. p. 25, 26.

[k] *Seeing the miracles which he wrought.*] These words, as also those in John iii. 2, and iv. 45, plainly refer to some miracles wrought by Christ, the particulars of which are not transmitted to us.

[l] *Believed in him.*] It is in the original, *believed in his name*; a Hebraism, which it did not seem necessary to retain. Nothing is more common, than to put the *name* of a person for the *person* himself. Compare John i. 12; xx. 31; Psal. lxxv. 1; Acts i. 15; and Rev. iii. 4.

[m] *Did not trust himself to them.*] I look upon this as a demonstration, that the *passover* here spoken of was not that at which *Christ suffered*: for then there had been no need of such a precaution, and indeed no room for it.

SECT. XXIV. consequently knew, that those people had such gross notions of the Messiah's kingdom, that there was no room for him to confide in them, John II. 25. or to expect them to be faithful to him.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 14 How powerful is the love of this world, when it could engage even the *priests* and the *Pharisees*, to let out *the temple* itself for a *market-place!* though a professed *zeal* for the honour of it, made so great a part of the *righteousness*, of which they 15, 16 boasted before God. But *our Lord* beheld the scene with *just indignation*; as that displeasure is indeed *just*, which arises from a sense of dishonour done to God, and contempt poured on the institutions of his worship. Happy shall we be in the warmest emotions of *zeal*, which do not transport us beyond the rules of prudence and love, and make us forget those stations in life, which require the same principles to shew themselves in widely different effects!

Methinks the state of the *temple*, when these *traders* had erected *their seats* and their *stalls* in it, and turned the courts of 16 *God's house* into a *market*, is too just an emblem of the state of our *hearts*, when we appear in the sanctuary distracted with *worldly cares*, to the neglect of that *one thing needful*, which then demands our most attentive regards. Would to God, that in this sense *our Father's house* were not often made *a house of merchandise!* Let us pray that *Jesus*, by his good Spirit, would assert it to himself, and *drive out* those intruders, which break in upon our truest enjoyments, in proportion to that degree in which they intrench on our devotion!

19 After a thousand proofs of his divine mission, the *Jews* were wicked and desperate enough, with sacrilegious hands to *destroy the temple of Christ's body:* but let us be thankful for the undoubted evidence we have, that as an everlasting monument of his power and truth, he *raised it again in three days.*

23, 25 Happy will it be for us, if we cordially *believe* a gospel so gloriously attested; but most vain will that belief be, which doth not penetrate and influence the heart. Let us remember, that we have to do with him that formed our nature, and is most intimately acquainted with all its recesses. *He knows what is in man:* may he see nothing in us, which shall not be thoroughly agreeable to the profession we make, of being his faithful disciples!

24 To conclude; let us learn from the *caution* which *Jesus* used, not rashly to put ourselves, and our usefulness, into the power of others; but to study a wise and happy medium, between that universal prejudice and *suspicion* which, while it wrongs the best and the most worthy characters, would deprive us of all the plea-

sures of an intimate friendship, and that undistinguishing *easiness* and openness of temper, which might make us the property of every hypocritical pretender to kindness and respect.

SECT XXV.

The former part of our Lord's conference with Nicodemus, in which he states the nature and necessity of regeneration. John III. 1—10.

JOHN III. 1.

JOHN III . 1. THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

NOW, while our Lord was thus attending at Jerusalem to keep the passover, *there was a* certain *man of the* sect of the *Pharisees, whose name was Nicodemus, a magistrate of the Jews*, and a member of the great sanhedrim, (John vii. 50.) who being alarmed, as many of his brethren were, and filled with wonder at the miracles that Jesus wrought, made him a visit in person, that he might more distinctly be informed of the nature of his doctrine, and of the true intent and purpose of his coming. But, lest any offence should be taken at his conversing openly with him, *he* secretly *came to Jesus by night*, in order to a private conference with him at his own lodgings; *and*, with the greatest reverence and respect, he *said unto him*, in his own name, as well as in the name of several of his brethren, *Rabbi*,[a] the wonders thou hast done have been related to us; and, having seriously considered the account that has been given us, *we know*, and cannot but allow, *that thou art a teacher come* with a commission *from God; for* we are thoroughly convinced, that *none can* ever *do these* wondrous *miracles*, that are in all respects so beneficial and divine, *which* we perceive *thou doest, unless* he be invested with a power from on high, and *God* himself *be with him* in an extraordinary manner. (See John ix. 30, 33.) I am come therefore to desire a more particular account[b] from thine own mouth, both

SECT. XXV. John III. 1.

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him.

[a] *Said unto him, Rabbi.*] This title cannot but appear very remarkable, as given by a person of so great dignity to one who, with regard to his education and rank in secular life, made so low an appearance as our blessed Lord did.

[b] *I am come to desire a more particular account, &c.*] Our Lord's answer intimates, that he either expressly made, or secretly intended, such an inquiry; and it is impossible to enter into the beauty of this discourse, without considering it in this view. Our Lord touches on the following grand points, in which it was of the utmost importance, that Nicodemus and his brethren should be

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of the doctrine which thou teachest, and of the kingdom which thou declarest God is about to erect.

John III. 3. *Jesus*, knowing the prejudices he laboured under, both as a Jew, and a Pharisee, judged it necessary immediately to acquaint him, with the absolute necessity of a thorough change, by divine grace, both in heart and life; a change so great, as might appear like coming into a new world, and would bring the greatest and most learned men to the simplicity of little children. (Compare Mat. xviii. 3.) He therefore *answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee*, and declare it with the utmost solemnity, as a truth of the highest importance, that whatever great privileges any may inherit by his natural birth, or how exact and strict soever he may be in ceremonial observances, *unless a man be born again*,[c] *he cannot* possibly *see the kingdom of God*, in such a manner as to secure an interest in its invaluable blessings.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

4. Now, as this form of speech was figurative and concise, *Nicodemus* did not understand what it meant; and therefore *says unto him*,

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a

informed—That no external profession, nor any ceremonial observances, or privileges of birth, could entitle any to the blessings of the *Messiah's kingdom*;—that an entire change of heart and life was necessary to that purpose;—that this must be accomplished by a divine influence on the mind; that mankind was in a state of condemnation and misery;—that the free mercy of God had given his Son to deliver them from it, and to raise them to a blessed immortality, which was the great design and purpose of his coming;—that all mankind, that is, Gentiles as well as Jews, were to share in the benefits of his undertaking;—that they were to be procured by his being lifted up on the cross, and to be received by faith in him;—but that if they rejected him, there was no other remedy, and their eternal aggravated condemnation would be the certain consequence of it.—Our Lord might enlarge more copiously on these heads; which it might be the more proper to do, as some of them were directly contrary to the notions commonly entertained by the Jews, concerning the *Messiah's kingdom*.

[c] *Unless a man be born again*: ἐαν μη τις γεννηθῃ ἀνωθεν.] Some would render ἀνωθεν, *from above*: but it is plain, that Nicodemus did not take it so; for he thought that, without *entering a second time into his mother's womb*, there was no being *born* in the manner Christ spoke of, ἀνωθεν, that is, *again*.—What is added at ver. 5, explains what was before undetermined, as to the *original* of this *birth*. Dr. Owen with great propriety observes, "That if "*regeneration* here mean only *reformation* "*of life*, our Lord, instead of making "any new discovery, has only thrown a "great deal of obscurity, on what was be"fore plain and obvious, and known not "only to the Jews but the wiser heathens. "And indeed, (says he immediately af"ter,) this is the main article in dispute "between many. Some think, all things "in scripture are expressed in condes"cension to our capacities, so that there "is still to be conceived in many of "them an inexpressible grandeur; "while, on the other hand, others sup"pose that, under the pomp and gran"deur of the most hyperbolical expres"sions, things of a low and ordinary "sense are to be understood." See Dr. Owen on the Spirit, p. 175.—For the full import of the phrases used in this verse, see my Sermons on Regeneration, No. IV. and V.

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John III. 4.

How can a man be born again, *when he is old*, as I now am? *Can he* possibly *enter a second time into his mother's womb, and* so *be born* over again? It would be perfectly absurd to think, that thou intendest this should be taken in a literal sense; and I confess, I am at a loss to know, what figurative interpretation is to be put upon it.

Man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born again?

Then *Jesus*, to explain his former meaning, *answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee*, and again repeat it, That *unless a man be born of water, and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*; or, in plain terms, whosoever would become a regular member of it, he must not only be baptized, but as ever he desires to share in its spiritual and eternal blessings, he must experience the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit on his soul, to cleanse it from the power of corruption, and to animate it to a divine and spiritual life. For were it possible for a man to be born again, in the literal sense that you have mentioned, by entering a second time into his mother's womb, such a second birth would do no more to qualify him for the kingdom of God, than the first: for *that which is born of the flesh, is* only *flesh; and* what proceeds and is produced from parents that are sinful and corrupt, is sinful and corrupt as they are;[d] but *that which is born of the Spirit, is* formed to a resemblance of that blessed *Spirit*, whose office it is to infuse a divine life into the soul.

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

6 That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.

Wonder not, therefore, *that I said unto thee*, and have declared it as a truth that you are all concerned in, That *you* yourselves, even though you are Jews, and Pharisees, and rulers of the people, yet *must be born again*; since the degeneracy of the human nature is of so universal an extent, as to be common to you all. Nor have you any cause to be surprised, if there be some things in this doctrine of regeneration, which are of an obscure and unsearchable na-

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

[d] Is sinful and corrupt as they are.] The many passages, in which *flesh* is put for a *corrupt degenerate nature*, enslaved to animal appetites and pursuits, seemed to me to justify this interpretation: and would to God, fact and experience did not so plainly vindicate it! (Compare Gen. vi. 3; Rom. viii. 8; Gal. v. 17—24; and Jude ver. 23.) Indeed it seems to me impossible, to clear up either the beauty of the antithesis, or even the truth of the assertion, on any other interpretation.

SECT. XXV.

John III. 8.

ture; for even in the natural world, many things are so: *The wind*, for instance, *bloweth where it will*, sometimes one way and sometimes another, and is not subject to the direction or command of man; *and* though *thou hearest the sound thereof*, and feelest its sensible and powerful effects, *yet thou canst not* exactly *tell*, from *whence it cometh, and whither it goeth*; for whatever general principles may be laid down concerning it, when you come to account for its particular variations, the greatest philosophers often find themselves at a loss; and in like manner, *so* it *is* with *every one that is born of the Spirit*: and you are so far from being capable of accounting for it, that it is easy to be seen there is a sovereign freedom in that divine agency, which makes it oftentimes impossible to say, why it is imparted to one, rather than to another; and there is a secret in the manner of its operation on the mind, which it is neither necessary to know, nor possible to explain.

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

9 But *Nicodemus*, who had been accustomed to the pomp and ceremony of an external religion, *answered and said unto him, How can these things be?* for, after all this explication, I am still at a loss to understand what this being born of the Spirit means, and therefore cannot conceive how it should be so absolutely necessary.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10 *Jesus* then *answered and said unto him*, How, Nicodemus! *art thou a teacher of Israel*, of so distinguished a rank and character, *and dost thou not know these things!*[e] when so much is every where said in the scripture, of the purifying and quickening operations of the divine Spirit on mens' hearts? (Compare Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; and Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) It is high time, thou shouldest be better informed concerning them.

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

[e] *Art thou a teacher of Israel, and dost thou not know these things.*] Could it be proved that the Jewish Rabbis, so early as Christ's time, called a *baptized person*, one *born again*, or *born of water*, that would strongly illustrate the passage before us. But though Dr. Claget and Mr. Locke, and after them Dr. Clarke, give the words this turn, the fact did not appear to me so evident, as to allow of my inserting it in the paraphrase.—However, it is strange to me, that any should doubt whether *proselytes* were admitted into the Jewish church, by *baptism*, that is, by *washing*; when it is plain from express passages in the Jewish law, that no Jew who had lived like a *Gentile* for one single day, could be restored to the communion of their church without it. Compare Numb. xix. 19, 20, and many other *precepts* relating to *ceremonial pollutions*; by which the Jews were rendered incapable of appearing before God in the tabernacle or temple, till they were *washed* either by *bathing* or *sprinkling*.

SECT. XXV.

IMPROVEMENT.

He that hath ears to hear, let him hear with attention, what the blessed Redeemer said on this great occasion. It is surely a matter of universal concern: for who would not desire to *enter into the kingdom of God?* to be an acceptable member of *Christ*'s church now, and an heir of glory beyond the grave?—But how is this blessing to be expected and secured? Thus saith the Lord himself, *Unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*—Let us remember therefore, that it is not enough, that a new name be given us, or that a new profession be assumed; it is not enough that we are descended from the most pious ancestors, that we have been externally devoted to God by the early seal of his covenant, or that we openly have made a solemn and express profession of our own faith and obedience, and have been *born of* baptismal *water* in our riper years! There must be a *new nature* implanted, a *new creation* formed in our souls, by the almighty energy of the eternal *Spirit*, or it had been better for us, that we had *never been born* at all. Verse 3

That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and as we all proceed from a corrupt original, we do not more evidently *bear the image of the earthly Adam*, in the infirmities of a mortal body, than in the degeneracy of a corrupted mind. Oh, let us earnestly entreat that, being born of the sanctifying influences *of the Spirit*, we may *bear the image of the heavenly!* And to these influences let us with all humility and thankfulness be ready to yield up our souls, as remembering, that they are of a free and sovereign nature, like *the wind*, that *bloweth where it will*, and *does not stay for* the command of *the children of men*. 6, 8

Let none of us indulge a vain and useless curiosity with respect to the *manner* of *the Spirit's operations*, or *wonder*, that we meet with some things, that are secret and unknown, in matters of a spiritual nature; when we see daily, there are so many things unknown in the common appearances of the natural world, and indeed so few that we can perfectly understand. 7, 8

May the pride of a falsely pretended *reason*, be subdued to the authority of *faith!* And more especially, may such as are *teachers in Israel*, or who are designed for that important office, take their instructions with all humility, from this *teacher* sent *from God!* For it must surely be not only *their calamity*, but that too of the *church* in general, if its guides continue ignorant of those sublime and spiritual truths, which *Christ* came down from heaven to reveal, or are so biassed by the carnal reasonings of a depraved mind, as to be indisposed and backward to receive them. 10 2

SECT. XXVI.

The latter part of our Lord's conference with Nicodemus, in which he opens the design of his coming into the world, and shews the absolute necessity of faith in him. John III. 11—21.

JOHN III. 11.

SECT. XXVI. John III. 11.

JESUS, pursuing his discourse with Nicodemus, said, I find that you are stumbled at this doctrine of regeneration, which I have now been opening to you: but howsoever it may still appear to be obscure and strange, yet labour to subdue the prejudices that arise against it; for, *verily, verily, I say unto thee,* That in the doctrine we have now delivered, *we speak* nothing but *what we* certainly *know,*[a] *and testify* no other than *that which we have seen,*[b] and can declare upon the surest grounds to be a most important truth, and to be perfectly agreeable to what we have received in commission from God himself; *and* yet, the disposition of the Jewish rulers and people is generally such, that *ye receive not our testimony,* and are likely still to reject it: 12 For these things, which I have already told you, are but the first principles, to make way for what is yet more marvellous. Now, *if I* hitherto *have told you* things which have been capable of being represented to you in a familiar way, and being illustrated

JOHN III. 11. VERILY, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told

[a] *We speak what we know.*] Some have supposed that, as Christ speaks here in the *plural number*, he may refer not only to the doctrine that was delivered by *himself*, but to the testimony that was given to the truth of it by John the Baptist, and to the preaching also of his own *disciples*, who all concurred in testifying the same things; the certainty of which they were assured of by the teachings of the *Spirit*, and by their own experience, while it was known to Christ by his omniscience, and by the intimate acquaintance that he had with all the councils of the Father.—And others have supposed, that he includes here, with *himself*, the *Father* and the *Spirit*, who are expressly spoken of in other passages, as *bearing witness* to the truth of what he said, and as *agreeing* with him in the testimony that he gave. (Compare John viii. 18; xiv. 20—26; and 1 John v. 6—8.)—But there is no necessity we should suppose him to refer to any other than *himself*; since nothing is more usual than for a person of authority to speak of himself in the *plural number*, as Christ may be observed to have done elsewhere; (Mark iv. 30.) and in the next verse he appears to have restrained it to *himself*, where he says only in the *singular number*, *If I have told you earthly things*, &c. See Lightfoot's Harmony in loc.

[b] *And testify that which we have seen.*] Christ seems here to allude to what was mentioned in the *law* as qualifying a man to be a *witness*, that he was able to declare of what he testified, that *he had seen or known it.* (Levit. v. 1.) And as he therefore had a clear perception, and a certain knowledge of the truth of what he said, there was the highest reason to receive his *testimony*, and to regard him as a *true and faithful witness.*

SECT. XXVI.

John III. 12.

you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you *of* heavenly things?

by obvious and well-known similitudes; so that by reason of their plainness, and of the frequent references to them in the Old Testament, they may be called *earthly things; and ye believe not* even these: *how* then *would you believe, if I* should yet go on to *tell you* other doctrines, which are not capable of being thus explained; and which indeed are so much more mysterious and sublime that, in comparison of what has been already told you, they may be called *heavenly things?*[c] (Compare Heb. vi. 1, 2; Psal. ciii. 11; and Isa. lv. 9.) Yet even these you will have no just reason to suspect, when you consider whence they come, *and* who it is that reveals them to you: for *no one* ever *has ascended up to heaven*, to search into the secret counsels, and to obtain an intimate and perfect knowledge of the truths of God;[d] *unless*, as you will see hereafter, *he* has done it, *who is* really *descended from heaven; [even] the Son of man who is in heaven*, as there is the place of his stated abode, whither he shortly will return, and as he now is present there by his divine nature, which fills both heaven and earth.

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

13

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent

And now I mention the Son of man, let me rectify that grand mistake of yours concerning his kingdom, which otherwise may be attended with such fatal consequences. You expect to see him raised on a magnificent throne, and not only breaking off the yoke from the Jewish na-

14

[c] *Heavenly things.*] This has been understood by some, of those sublime and heavenly doctrines, that were afterwards revealed,—of the *eternal generation of the Son*, and of the *fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily*,—and of those other *mysteries of godliness*, that are above the reach of human reason, and cannot be illustrated by *earthly things*; (see Lightfoot's Harmony in loc.) Though it would rather seem, that our Lord does more immediately refer to the doctrines which he mentions in the remaining part of his discourse to Nicodemus,—of his descent from heaven to instruct us in the things of God, and be united to the human nature here below, while by his divine nature he still continued to be present above:—of the design for which he came into the world, to be lifted up upon the cross, that he might save us from our sins;—of everlasting life and happiness to be obtained by faith in his death;—and of the condemnation of all those that should reject him: which may be counted as *the deep things of God*, which he *reveals unto us by his Spirit*, and which *the natural man* who disregards that Spirit, *receiveth not, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*; 1 Cor. ii. 10—14.

[d] *Ascended up to heaven* to search into—the truths of God.] The phrase of *ascending into heaven* is plainly used in this sense, Deut. xxx. 12; Rom. x. 6; and Prov. xxx. 4.—As for the turn here given to the particle ει μη, see the note on John xvii. 12; sect. clxxix.

SECT. XXVI.

tion, but leading them on to conquer and destroy the Gentiles: but I must assure you, that *as Moses lifted up the* brasen *serpent* on a pole *in the wilderness*, to heal those that were dying by the venom of the fiery serpents there, (see Numb. xxi. 8, 9.) *so* also *must the Son of man be* first *lifted up* on a cross, (compare John viii. 28; xii. 32, 34.) and then publicly exhibited in the preaching of the gospel, that sinners may by him receive a far more noble and important cure:[e] Even *that whoever believeth on him may not perish*, as all in their natural state would otherwise do,[f] *but may* obtain so perfect recovery, as certainly to *have eternal life*. *For* this is indeed the summary of that important message which I bring to the children of men, that *God so loved the world*,[g] apostate and miserable as it was; yea, to such an amazing and unutterable a degree did he love it, *that he gave* even *his only-begotten Son* from his embraces, *that whoever believeth on him*, whatever be the nation he belongs to, or whatever his guilt be, he *may not perish* under the sentence of divine justice, *but may have everlasting life* and glory. *For God sent not his son into the world, to condemn the world*, and to execute that vengeance upon them, which their guilt might have taught them to fear; nor did he send him to destroy the Gentile nations, as your Jewish prejudices are ready to represent it; *but that the world* of mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles, *might be saved by him*, even all

John III. 14.

15 16

17

in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.

15 That whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

[e] *A far more noble and important cure.*] The grand point of *similitude* here, is in the *manner* of performing the *cure*, that is by *believing regards* to something *lifted up* for that purpose, by a *divine appointment*. It would be blasphemy to run a parallel between Christ, and that which gave us the deadly wound: and to talk, as Grotius and Dr. Clarke here do, of the resemblance between him, and the image of the *serpent*, as he was *made in the likeness of sinful flesh*, seems in this connection to be foreign to the purpose.

[f] *As all in their natural state would otherwise do.*] This is strongly implied here, and yet more strongly in ver. 18, where all that *do not believe* are said to be *condemned already*: and till men enter deeply into this important truth, the gospel may indeed be their amusement, but I see not how it is like to be their joy or their cure.

[g] *God so loved the world.*] It is not only a very arbitrary criticism, by which Erasmus makes these the words of the evangelists, rather than of Christ, but if it were admitted, it would destroy much of the beauty and energy of that awful admonition, which our Lord gives to Nicodemus, and by him to his brethren, in this his first entrance on his ministry. No doubt, many of them attended him to learn the result of this conference, which to the best of his understanding we may conclude he honestly reported: and it is sad to think, what an aggravation it was of the unbelief and impenitence of that grand council, who afterwards treated Christ with so much contempt and malignity.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.

without exception who will listen to the overtures of his gospel. And therefore, on the one hand, *he that believeth on him*, how great soever his sins may have been, and however unpardonable according to the tenor of the Mosaic law, yet *shall not be* finally *condemned*, *but* shall obtain a complete pardon: and on the other hand, *he that believeth not*, whatever his external profession and privileges may be, *is condemned already*, remaining under the sentence of his former guilt, yea, and subjecting himself by his refusal of the only remedy to greater and more aggravated woe; *because he hath not believed in the* illustrious *name*[h] *of the only-begotten Son of God*, though expressly revealed to him on so glorious and important an occasion.

SECT. XXVI. John III. 18.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

Now, through the great perverseness of mankind, I certainly foresee that this will be the case with multitudes; for *this is the* great *condemnation*, the crime that fills up the measure of mens' iniquities, and proves the surest cause of their final and speedy ruin, *that* a divine *light is come into the world, and* yet *men have loved darkness rather than light*, and have chosen to remain ignorant, rather than to submit themselves to the teachings of this heavenly revelation; and the reason is plainly this, *because their deeds were evil*, and they have not virtue enough to resolve on a thorough reformation. *For* 19

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

every one who is conscious to himself that he *doeth evil*, and will persist in his wickedness, *hateth the light*, as the cause of anguish and shame to his guilty mind; *and* he *cometh not to the light, lest his actions should be reproved* by it, and so his character exposed, and his conscience disquieted, (Compare Eph. v. 13.) *But* 20

21 But he that

he that practises truth[i] and virtue, sincerely en- 21

[h] *Believed in the* illustrious *name.*] Though *the name* of a person be often put for *the person* himself, yet I think it is farther intimated in that expression, that the person spoken of is great and magnificent; and therefore it is generally used, to express either *God the Father*, or our *Lord Jesus Christ*.

[i] *He that practises truth*: ὁ ποιῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν.] This phrase often occurs as the character of a *good man*: (Compare Psal. cxix. 30; Isa. xxvi. 2; 1 Pet. i. 22; 1 John i. 6; and 2 John, ver. 4.) And it is used with great propriety, since there is as really a *truth* or *falsehood* in *actions*, as in *words*; as Mr. Wollaston in particular has shewn at large; See Relig. of Nature, chap. i.—Of the same kind is the phrase ποιεῖν ψεῦδος, used more than once by St. John, perhaps in a beautiful *opposition* to this before us; and should it be rendered, *practiseth a lie*, that *opposition* would be more apparent; see Rev. xxi. 27.; xxii. 15.

SECT. XXVI.

deavouring to adjust his actions according to the eternal law of righteousness, or the nature and obligation of things, *comes to the light* with confidence and pleasure, and takes all opportunities of improving his knowledge, *that his actions may be made manifest*, as in open day; knowing it will appear *that they are wrought in God*,[k] that is, that they are agreeable to the divine nature and will, and the consequence of that union of soul with him, which is the highest dignity and happiness of a rational creature. Be it therefore known unto you all, that this gospel which I preach, is the great touchstone of mens' true characters; and, as nothing but a corruption of heart can oppose it, so I faithfully warn you, that if you reject it, it is at the peril of your souls.

John III. 21. doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

This was the purport of our Lord's discourse with Nicodemus; and it appears by some following circumstances of the story, that it made a deep and lasting impression on his mind. See John vii. 50; and xix. 39.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 13 How happy is it for us that, since *none* of the *children of men* ever *ascended up into heaven*, to learn the mysteries of divine knowledge there, *the only-begotten Son of God* has been 11 pleased to *come down from thence*, that he might instruct us! He *spake what he knew, and testified what he had seen*: Oh, that men were so wise as to *receive his testimony*, be the discoveries ever so new, or the doctrines ever so sublime!

Let us with peculiar pleasure attend unto that *abstract of the gospel*, which he exhibited in this profitable and comprehensive discourse with *Nicodemus*.—It presents to our view Christ, and *him crucified*. It opens the treasures of divine beneficence and 16 compassion, and shews us the Father of mercies *so loving a world*, which he might justly have abhorred and destroyed, as to *give his only-begotten Son* to be a ransom for it.

14 Let us behold him *lifted up* on the cross, as the great attractive, to whom all were to be *drawn!* In him shall we find the *divine cure* for our souls, infected as they are with the poison of sin, if we behold him not merely with a curious, but a *believ-*

[k] *That they are wrought in God*: ὅτι ἐν Θεῷ εἰργασμένα.] Grotius thinks, that ἐν is here used for κατα, and that it only signifies, *agreeable to the Divine nature*: this is certainly comprehended, but it is not all it expresses. His instance of the like use of the particle, in 1 Cor. vii. 39, seems insufficient; for *to marry* ἐν τῷ Κυρίῳ *in the Lord*, signifies there, the *marrying* one who is *in Christ*, that is, *a Christian*.

ing eye. Whatever our wounds be, if in the exercise of *faith* we look to him, we shall not die of them; but it is owing to our own obstinacy and impenitence, if we yet *perish.* SECT. XXVI.

He might justly have appeared in a different form, for the *condemnation* of sinners, rather than their *salvation.* The *Son of God* might have *come into* an apostate *world* armed with thunderbolts of flaming vengeance, to punish the violation of his Father's law; but his hands are filled with eternal blessings. Verse 17

As we love our own souls, let us apply to him in time for this *salvation.* Let us dread the aggravated *condemnation* of those who, *when light is come into the world,* prefer *darkness* to it, and obstinately shut their eyes against it, though it be the dawnings of an eternal day. 19

May integrity and uprightness preserve us! (Psal. xxv. 21.) And, conscious of a real desire to govern ourselves according to the *light* we have, may we cheerfully lay ourselves in the way of more; that in the last awful day, when the sentence of divine wrath shall be executed on all the servants of sin, and their character shall stand disclosed in the most odious colours, ours may shine out beautiful and fair, and the good *deeds* that we have done, being now *wrought in God,* may then not only be accepted and applauded, but through the grace of the Redeemer abundantly rewarded by him! 20, 21

SECT. XXVII.

John the Baptist's last testimony to Christ, on occasion of a dispute concerning his baptism, and that administered by our Lord's disciples. John III. 22. *to the end.*

JOHN III. 22.

JOHN III. 22.
AFTER these things, came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea, and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

AFTER these things, Jesus and his disciples came from Jerusalem, where they had kept the passover together, *into* a part of *the land of Judea,* at some distance from the capital city; *and there he continued with them, and* by their ministry, though not in his own person, *baptized.* (See John iv. 2.) SECT. XXVII. John III. 22.

23 And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there:

And John was also at that time *baptizing at Enon,* which was a place *near Salim,* a town on the west side of Jordan; and he particularly chose that place, *because there was a great quantity of water there,*[a] which made it very con- 23

[a] *At Enon,—because there was a great quantity of water there.*] It is exceeding difficult to determine the true situation of this place, about which geographical writers are not at all agreed. We may conclude however from ver. 26, that it was *on the west side of Jordan,* as Bethabara, where John had baptized before, was *on*

SECT. XXVII.

venient for his purpose: *and they came* from all parts, *and were baptized* by him. *For* the reader will observe, that *John* the Baptist *was not yet thrown into prison*;[b] as he was a few months after, by the injustice of Herod, in whose territories that place lay.

John III. 24.

and they came, and were baptized.

24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

25 *And there was* about this time, *a* warm *dispute* [*between some*] *of the disciples of John and a* [*certain*] *Jew*,[c] who had been baptized by Christ, *about* this right of *purifying*, or baptism, which was administered in different parts by these two divine teachers; for notwithstanding their commissions and administrations were so harmonious, yet some, through ignorance and weakness, were ready to oppose them to each other.

25 Then there arose a question between *some* of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

26 *And* such was the concern of John's disciples upon this occasion, that *they came to John, and said unto him, Rabbi*, we are solicitous for thy honour in the present conjuncture of affairs: for *he that was* lately *with thee on the other side Jordan*, and *to whom thou gavest* such an honourable *testimony* there, *behold, he* now *baptizeth, and*, people from *all* parts, yea even such as have before received thy baptism, *come unto him*; which, as we fear, may cause thy baptism to be neglected, and tend to the injury of thy character, since some are already making very invidious comparisons, between him and thee.

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all *men* come to him.

27 But *John replied* to his disciples, with an humility and integrity agreeable to the rest of his character, *and said*, in order to convince them farther of the superior honours due to the bles-

27 John answered

the other side.—But nothing surely can be more evident, than that πολλα ὑδατα, *many waters*, signifies *a large quantity of water*, it being sometimes used for the Euphrates, Jer. li. 13. Septuag. To which I suppose there may also be an allusion, Rev. xvii. 1. Compare Ezek. xliii. 2; and Rev. i. 15; xiv. 2; xix. 6; where *the voice of many waters* does plainly signify the roaring of a high sea.

[b] *John was not yet thrown into prison.*] I think it probable from hence, as well as from tradition, and many other passages in this gospel itself, that St. John wrote it as a supplement to the rest. For he speaks of the Baptist's imprisonment as a thing generally known, and yet says nothing of his *martyrdom*, though he had given so large an account of his ministry. We cannot suppose, he would have omitted so material a fact, had he not known that the other evangelists had recorded it at large; as will be seen in the next section, and in sect. lxxvii.

[c] *A certain Jew.*] The many copies which read it thus, as well as the authority of the Syriac version, and the citations of some of the *fathers*, determine me to prefer this reading, which I think gives rather an easier sense; as a single Jew might most properly be opposed to John's disciples, who were Jews themselves; and as a considerable part of the nation had entered themselves into that number, at least so far as *receiving his baptism* was a token of it.

and said, A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven.

sed Jesus, Do not give way to such vain partiality and fondness for me: for *a man can* indeed *receive*, and therefore ought to assume *nothing* to himself, *unless it be given him from heaven*; but we are just what God is pleased to make us, and must stand in that rank which his infinite wisdom has seen fit to assign us. Nor have you any reason to be surprised at the report you bring me, or to imagine I shall regard it as a matter of complaint: for *you yourselves*, in what you now have said, *bear witness to me*,[d] and cannot but remember *that*, even from the very first of my appearance, *I* expressly *said*, and was on all occasions ready to repeat it, *that I am not the Christ; but that I am sent* as an harbinger *before him*; and therefore am so far from being in any opposite and separate interest, that his success is my greatest joy. *It is the bridegroom* only, *that hath the bride*; and it is his peculiar right to enjoy her as his own: *but* as for *the* intimate *friend of the bridegroom, who standeth* near him, *and heareth him* express his delight and complacency in her,[e] he is so far from envying and repining at it, that, if he really deserves the name of a friend, he rather *rejoiceth with* exceeding *great joy on account of the bridegroom's voice*. Such *therefore* is the friendship and the high regard I have for Jesus, that *this* that you have told me is *my joy*; which is so far from being at all impaired that it *is* heightened and *completed* on this happy occasion, which you should rather have been ready to congratulate, than to have made it matter of complaint.

SECT. XXVII.

John III. 27.

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

28

29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

29

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

I know that as to him, *he* daily *must increase*, and, like the growing moon, appear continually more and more glorious; *but I must* gradually

30

[d] *You yourselves bear witness to me; αὐτοὶ ὑμεῖς μοι μαρτυρεῖτε.*] There seems to be an intimation in these words, that what they themselves had just been saying, was a sufficient proof of what the Baptist was going to declare; for they had described Jesus, by the character of *him to whom John had borne witness.*

[e] *Heareth him* express his delight and complacency in her.] Some have supposed that this alludes to a peculiar ceremony, attending the *marriages* among the Jews; which the reader may find in Dr. Hammond in loc. and Selden. Uxor. Heb. lib. ii. cap. 16. But perhaps it may be a more general reference to any of the natural expressions of *joy* on such an occasion.—I pretend not to determine how far Bishop Patrick may be right in supposing, "that this is an allusion to the "*cabbalistic doctrine*, that Tipheret, the "*Great Adam*, or the Messiah, is married "to Malcuth, *the congregation of Israel*, "as the terrestrial Adam was to Eve." See his preface to Canticles, § 4.

SECT. XXVII.

wane, and *decline*, till I entirely disappear from hence: (for the end of my ministry is now in a great measure answered, and therefore I quickly expect to be dismissed from it.) And it is fit it should be so: for *he that cometh from above*, as Jesus did, *is* far *above all* the children of men, and so undoubtedly is above me; while, on the other hand, *he that* originally *was of the earth*,[t] being born like me in a natural way, *is* still *of the earth*, mean and imperfect, and can never hope, by any refinements and improvements, to equal what is heavenly and divine; but what he says will correspond with his original, *and* being earthly in his rise, he *speaketh of the earth*; the subjects of his discourse are comparatively low, or howsoever noble and sublime they be, there is a mixture of infirmity and weakness in his way of treating them: whereas *he, who* originally *cometh from heaven*, and who has shewn so wonderful a condescension in his visiting this lower world, *is* still, in the midst of all his voluntary abasement, incomparably *above all* that dwell upon earth, not only in the dignity and glory of his person, but in the spiritual and heavenly nature of his doctrine. *And I* declare it to you with the greatest confidence, that *what he hath seen and heard*, or what he knows to the utmost degree of certainty, *that does he testify* and publish to the world; *and* I exceedingly lament it, that, notwithstanding all that eagerness of curiosity with which the multitudes are flocking now about him, yet *no man* cordially *receives his testimony*; and among all that hear him there are very few, who are duly affected with what he delivers, and yield as they ought to its divine evidence and importance. But *he, who hath* indeed *received his testimony*, acts a most wise and happy part, and *hath*, as it were, *set his seal* [*to it,*] *that God is true*; acknowledging his hand in these credentials given to his Son, and his veracity, in sending him thus furnished to fulfil his an-

John III. 31.

31 He that cometh from above, is above all; he that is of the earth, is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven, is above all.

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

33 He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal, that God is true.

[t] *He that was of the earth.*] To render ὁ ὢν ἐκ τῆς γῆς thus, prevents the appearance of a tautology in the following words, ἐκ τῆς γῆς ἐστι, which would otherwise seem unavoidable.

34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God; for God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him.*

cient promises to his people. *For he whom God hath sent* into the world as the promised Messiah, *speaketh the words of God*, and all that he reveals should be regarded as divine oracles: *for God giveth not the* powers and the inspiration of his *Spirit* [*to him*] *by measure*, under such limitations and with such interruptions as he gives it to his other messengers;[g] but it dwells in him by a constant presence, and operates by a perpetual energy. For *the* Almighty *Father loveth the Son* incomparably beyond the most faithful of his servants; *and hath* not only established him as the great Teacher of his church, but hath *given* the government of *all things into his hand*, that he may be regarded as the universal Lord.

SECT. XXVII. John III. 34.

35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

35

36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

So that instead of repining at his growing glories, you should rather be solicitous to secure an interest in his favour: for this is the substance, and this is the end of my whole testimony,[h] that *he who believeth on the Son, hath* a sure title to *eternal life*, and hath already the beginnings of it wrought in his soul; *but he that is disobedient to the Son*,[i] and obstinately persists in his unbelief and impenitence, *shall not see* and enjoy that *life; but*, on the contrary, is so far from it, that *the wrath of God*, and the unpardoned aggravated guilt of all his sins, *abideth* even now *upon him*, and will quickly sink him into final condemnation and ruin.

36

Thus did that holy man John the Baptist conclude those testimonies to Christ which are

[g] Under such limitations and with such interruptions as he gives it to his other messengers.] With what limitations and interruptions, the extraordinary *gifts of the Spirit* were given, even to the greatest of the children of men, we shall have repeated occasion to observe in the process of this work.

[h] This is the substance, and this the end of my whole testimony.] Erasmus here destroys (as he had done before, at ver. 16.) the beauty of this discourse, by supposing that the latter part of it is to be considered as the reflection and attestation of the evangelist, upon occasion of the testimony that was given by the Baptist; though he seems himself at a loss to fix the clause at which this supposed *change* of the *person speaking* begins.

[i] *He that is disobedient to the Son.*] I think it is of great importance to preserve a difference in the translation, correspondent to that in the original, between ὁ πιστευων εις τον υἱον, and ὁ απειθων τῳ υἱῳ; because the latter phrase explains the former, and shews that the *faith* to which the promise of *life* is annexed, is an effectual principle of sincere and unreserved *obedience*; and it is impossible to make one part of *scripture* consistent with another, unless this be taken into our idea of *saving faith*; as I have shewn at large in the first of my Sermons on Salvation by Grace through Faith.

SECT. XXVII.

recorded in the gospel, and was quickly after imprisoned by Herod the tetrarch; as the course of this history will presently shew.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 26 IT is indeed too true that *the spirit which* naturally *dwelleth in us* all *lusteth to envy*, (Jam. iv. 5.) and it is far from being a low attainment in religion to look with complacency and thankfulness on the superior abilities and acceptance of others, especially of those who once appeared in an inferior rank. But for the cure of this unreasonable and restless passion, so contrary to 27 the true spirit of the gospel, let us remember that *a man can receive nothing* at all *except it be given him from heaven*. It is God that makes one man to *differ* from another; and surely nothing can be more unreasonable than that, when we ourselves have received all from his bounty, *our eye should be evil because he is good*. (Mat. xx. 15.)

29 If we are indeed the *friends of Christ*, we shall *rejoice* to see his interest advance, and especially to see souls espoused to him as the great *Bridegroom* of the church, whoever are the instruments of promoting so happy a work. *Would to God that* in this sense *all the Lord's people were* even as the greatest of the *prophets*, or as the very chief of the *apostles!* (Numb. xi. 29.)

30 But if indeed they were so, yet, like those brightest luminaries of the church, they must in time have their *change* and their *wane*. If God does not darken their glories by a sudden *eclipse*, yet they who are now, like the *Baptist*, *burning and shining lights*, *must* like him gradually *decrease*, while others are *increasing* about them; as they, in their turns, grew up amidst the decays of the former generation. Let us know how to *set* as well as to *rise*; and let it comfort our declining days, to trace in those that are like to succeed us in our work, the openings of yet greater usefulness. So shall we grow in our meetness for that world where all *the righteous shall shine forth* together, *as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father*, in a bright resemblance of him *with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning*.

33 As the surest means of guiding us to that happy world, let us make it our great care, *by receiving the testimony of Christ, to set* our *seal to the truth of God*, engaged in his cause.—With how much pleasure should we do it, and with what joy should we re-

34, 35 flect, that *the Father* so *loveth the Son*, that he has not only *given him* the rich and unmeasurable communications of the *Spirit*, but *has committed* also *into his hand* the reins of *government!* Let his faithful servants remember it with joy, and cheerfully commit their concerns to him *who is made head over all things for* the benefit of *his church*, (Eph. i. 22.)

And to conclude: let it engage us to see to the sincerity of our *faith* in him, and *subjection* to him; since it is not a light matter, but *our life*, even the very *life of our souls*. May God awaken those on whom his *wrath* now *abideth*, to a sense of their danger, and may he strengthen in each of our souls that *faith* which is the pledge of a happy immortality! SECT. XXVII. Verse 36

SECT. XXVIII.

John the Baptist is imprisoned by Herod. Luke III. 19—20. Mark VI. 17—20. Mat. XIV. 3—5.

LUKE III. 19.

BUT Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him, for Herodias' [sake] his brother Philip's wife, [MARK, for he had married her] and for all the evils which Herod had done. [MAT. XIV. 3; MARK VI. 17.]

LUKE III. 19.

THUS John went on to prosecute the great design of his appearance, and to prepare the way for the reception of Jesus: *but* much about this time, it pleased God to permit the course of his ministry to be interrupted, and his life itself to be quickly after brought to its period. For *Herod* Antipas, *the tetrarch* of Galilee, having out of curiosity sent for him to his court, this holy man thought it his duty to admonish him in regard to the public scandals of his life and reign. Now Herod *being* thus plainly and faithfully *reproved by him*, both *on account of Herodias his brother Philip's wife*, *(for*, to the infamy and scandal of his character, *he had* ungenerously taken her from her husband, and publicly *married her*,[a] in contempt of all laws human and Divine,[b]) *and* also *for all the other* SECT. XXVIII. Luke III. 19.

[a] *On account of Herodias,—for he had married her.*] Josephus gives us an account of this *incestuous marriage*, which proved the occasion of the *Baptist's imprisonment* and *death*, (Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 5. (al. 7.) § 1, 4. Havercamp.) from whence it appears, that this Herodias was daughter to Aristobulus, one of the sons of Herod the Great, and consequently was niece both to Philip her former husband, and to Herod Antipas the tetrarch her latter. By Philip, whom Josephus also calls Herod (as princes had often several names), she had one daughter, whose name was Salome, (ibid. p. 885.) who probably was the young lady afterwards mentioned, sect. lxxvii. as instructed by her mother to ask the head of John the Baptist. And that historian informs us, that Herod the tetrarch, to make way for his marriage with Herodias, divorced his former wife, the daughter of Aretas: which made this commerce a kind of *double adultery*, and was the occasion of a war between those two princes, in which Herod's forces were defeated.

[b] In contempt of all laws human and Divine.] The only case in which *the law* allowed of *marrying* one who had been a *brother's wife* was, when the brother *died childless*, (Lev. xviii. 16; xx. 21; and Deut. xxv. 5.) whereas in this instance Philip was yet *living*, and had a *daughter* by Herodias. It was also in violation of all the rites of *hospitality* that Herod, while a guest in his brother's house seduced his wife; as Josephus expressly observes, Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 5. § 1. p. 883.

SECT. XXVIII.

evils that Herod had done, which were many and great, that haughty prince was so exasperated that, instead of falling under the admonition, he meditated revenge: And though for the present he dismissed him,[c] it was not long before he prosecuted his design, and *added yet this* act of wickedness *to all* [*the rest*] of his enormous crimes, *that he* confined and *shut up John in prison*. *For Herod himself*[d] *sent* officers after him, *and seized John*, who had returned to prosecute his ministry in a place which lay within the territories of Galilee; *and* having thus got him into his power, he *bound him* with chains,[e] *and put him in prison*; though his confinement there was not so close but that his disciples were sometimes suffered to converse with him; (compare Mat. xi. 2, 4; and Luke vii. 19, 22; sect. lvii.)

Luke III. 20.

Mark VI. 17

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

Mark VI. 17. For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him, [and put *him*] in prison. Mat. XIV. 3.

18 And though he might assign other political reasons to excuse his conduct, as if his growing popularity rendered him dangerous to the state,[f] yet the true reason *for* which he did it was this, that *John* had treated him with such a freedom as he knew not how to bear, and *had told Herod* to his very face, *It is not lawful for thee* that thou shouldest take upon thee as thou doest *to have thy brother's wife*, nor canst thou ever have any solid peace of conscience while 19 thou continuest to retain her. *And* for this cause *Herodias* also was yet more furiously incensed against him, and with an unrelenting cruelty still *hung upon him*;[g] *and* not content-

18 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. [Mat. XIV. 4.]

19 Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would

[c] *Though for the present he dismissed him.*] Else there would have been no need for his *sending to seize him*, as we are presently told he did.

[d] *Herod himself.*] There seems to be a peculiar emphasis in this expression which probably may be designed to intimate, that *his seizing John* was not merely the effect of Herodias's solicitations, but of his own resentment.—The *place* where he seized him might probably be Enon, where John had lately baptized, and where he again might return to his work; and if so, Enon must have been in Herod's jurisdiction. Compare note a on John iii. 23. p. 157.

[e] *Bound him with chains.*] It is plain from Matthew's manner of expressing this, *that he bound him, and put him in prison*, that *chains* were added to his confinement, as usual in such cases; (compare Acts ii. 6; and xxviii. 20.) so that those versions which consider δησας as an expletive, lose part of the sense.

[f] *Dangerous to the state.*] Josephus expressly says, that Herod was afraid the authority of so great a man should occasion a revolt among his subjects; and that he thought it better to take him off, than to venture the danger of such a revolution as he might have occasioned; Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 5. § 2, p. 884. He there adds, that he first confined him in the castle of Macheris.

[g] *Herodias hung upon him.*] This seems to me the import of the phrase ειχεν αυτω which is with peculiar propriety applied to a dog's fastening his teeth into his prey, and holding it down. See De Dieu in loc. and compare Luke xi. 53.—There

have killed him, but she could not.

20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

ed with what he suffered in his imprisonment, SECT. *would* fain *have put him to death, but she could* XXVIII. *not* immediately compass that design: *For* Mark *Herod*, notwithstanding all his resentment, still VI. 20. *reverenced John*[h] in his heart; *knowing that he was a righteous and holy man*, of which the fidelity of his reproofs was a very convincing evidence. *And* therefore calling him to frequent audiences, *he heard him* discourse *with attention*[i] *and pleasure: and* was so far influenced by it, that he *did many things* according to his exhortations.[k]

MAT. XIV. 5. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

But as John was still pressing him to dismiss Mat. Herodias, and telling him the insufficiency of XIV. 5. any other reformation while he continued his infamous commerce with her; *and* she in the mean time wearied Herod with her importunity; *when* he at length was so far wrought upon, that *he would* gladly *have* consented to *put him to death*, he was so apprehensive of the consequences of it, that he durst not do it, since *he feared the multitude; because* he knew that *they* respected John, and *looked upon him as a prophet*,[l] and he did not think it safe to provoke such a factious people by an action so extremely unpopular.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT dangerous things are grandeur and power, if divine Luke grace does not secure the hearts of those who possess them! How III. 19, 20.

seems an opposition seldom remarked between *this* and ver. 17. Herod *himself* seized him, but Herodias went still farther. —Josephus gives a very bad character of this Herodias, and assures us that her ambitious and envious spirit was at last the cause of Herod's ruin and her own. Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 7. (al. 9.)

[h] *Reverenced John*, εφοβειτο.] The same word is justly so translated, Eph. v. 33, and there are many other passages where it has the same sense. See Luke xii. 5; and Rev. xi, 18; xiv. 7.

[i] *Heard him with attention.*] So I chuse to render συνετηρει αυτον, rather than *preserved* or *protected him*, (compare Luke ii. 19. Gr.) though I know that the word sometimes signifies *to preserve*. (Mat. ix. 17.) Our English version of this passage appears to be improper; and I hope the little transposition I have made here will be forgiven, since it makes not the least alteration in the sense, and suits best with the genius of our language. Such little liberties elsewhere seem not so considerable as to need a more particular apology.

[k] *Did many things.*] Grotius would have it rendered, that *he had heard him formerly with pleasure, and had done many things*; supposing this refers to what had passed before his imprisonment; but such a change doth not appear necessary, as the *paraphrase* plainly shews.

[l] *Looked upon him as a prophet.*] Accordingly Josephus says (in the place quoted above in note f) that the Jews in general looked on the succeeding calamities of Herod's reign as a *judgment* from God for his injustice to this holy man.

SECT. XXVIII. unhappy are they whose fatal prerogative it is to be able to oppress with impunity, and to render it hazardous even to reprove them!

Mark VI. 18. *John* well deserved the veneration and esteem of *Herod*, when he thus took the freedom to perform this dangerous office of friendship, and to manifest a fidelity so seldom to be found in courts, and indeed so often wanting elsewhere. A wise prince would have courted his friendship, and sought his advice; but he is at length rewarded with *imprisonment* and *death*.

Mark VI. 17. This good man was taken from his work, and *laid aside* in the midst of his days and usefulness; but he calmly acquiesced in the disposals of Providence, and no doubt carried along with him to his *prison* incomparably more happiness than his persecutors could find on the *throne*.

In this confinement the *prophet* was not *forgotten*; but as if *Herod* had studied to increase his own torment, he must be sent for again and again to discourse before him. That he *reverenced* a man of such approved integrity, none can wonder: but while he would not be entirely reformed by his remonstrances, that he should *hear him with pleasure*, and *do many things*, is very surprising. Delusive pleasure! unprofitable reformation! while whatsoever instances, he gave of his regarding him, *Herodias* was yet retained. May divine grace preserve us from such fatal partiality! since, did we *keep the whole law, and offend* allowedly but *in one point*, we should become *guilty of all*; Jam. ii. 10.

We cannot wonder if a reformation thus insincere and partial, was but short lived, and was followed at length by a grosser apostacy. *More bitter than death is the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands bands*; (Eccles. vii. 26.) To what may not the artifices of such an abandoned creature work up the wretch that is entangled with her charms! Such was the influence of *Herodias* over him, that at her instigation *Herod* is prevailed upon to seek the *death* of that *righteous and holy man*, whose virtues he revered, and whose preaching he had attended with pleasure.

Mat. XIV. 5. But the *fear of the people* restrained him, though he was destitute of the *fear of God*, and had not any generous regard to men. Thus does God govern the world, and thus does he protect his church, by often making it the interest, even of the worst of men to forbear those injuries and cruelties which the malignity of their natures might otherwise dictate. Let us courageously *commit the keeping of our souls to him in well-doing*, as firmly believing that, whatever hazards we may be exposed to, *the wrath of man shall* on the whole be found to *praise him*, and *the remainder of* that *wrath shall he restrain*. Psal. lxxvi. 10.

SECT. XXIX.

Christ going from Judea to Galilee meets with a woman of Samaria, and enters into a conference with her, in which he discovers himself to her as the Messiah. John IV. 1—26.

JOHN IV. 1.

WHEN therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

JOHN IV. 1.

SECT. XXIX. John IV. 1.

THE testimony which the Baptist had given to Christ, together with the miracles he himself had wrought at Jerusalem during the passover (see John ii. 23. and iii. 2): impressed the minds of the people to such a degree, that, during his long abode in those parts, vast numbers were continually flocking around him; which gave great umbrage to the Jewish rulers. *When therefore the Lord knew that the Pharisees*, whose interest in the sanhedrim was so considerable, *had heard* with great concern what began to be so much talked of abroad, *that Jesus made and baptised more disciples than John* the Baptist himself had done;[a] (2 Though indeed *Jesus himself*, for wise reasons, *did not* chuse to *baptize* any with his own hands,[b] *but* left some of *his disciples* to do it in the name of a Messiah shortly to be manifested;) 3 In order to avoid both their envy and their curiosity, *he left Judea*, after having continued there about eight months,[c] *and departed again into*

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.)

3 He left Judea.

[a] *More disciples than John* the Baptist himself had done.] I am not certain whether this happened *before John's imprisonment* or *after*; but if I had been sure it happened *before*, I should still have thought it proper to add the account of *that event* (as I have done in the preceding section) immediately after his last testimony, though some other facts might possibly intervene: but if, (which seems most probable,) Mat. iv. 12; and Mark i. 14, sect. xxxi. *init.*) refer to *this journey*, they both in plain words assert it was *after John's imprisonment*.—I cannot forbear saying, it is astonishing that a person of Mr. Whiston's learning and sagacity should place all these events *before the baptism* and *temptation of Christ*. Were his arguments to confirm his *eighth proposition* far more specious than they are, they would never solve or balance the flagrant absurdity of making John declare, (John i. 32, 34.) that *he saw the spirit descending on Christ*, above a year before it did so descend; yet this ingenious writer has forgotten himself so far, as to represent the matter in this contradictory view; (see Whiston's Harmony, p 135—139. and p. 227 compared with p. 242.) The interpretation given above of Mat. iii. 14; and Luke iii. 21. (p 113, 114.) may solve some of the chief arguments, on which he builds this singular *hypothesis*.

[b] *Jesus himself did not* chuse to *baptize* any with his own hands.] This might be partly to avoid importunate inquiries whether he was the Messiah, and partly to prevent those prejudices which might have arisen against the more perfect form of *baptism* afterwards instituted, if any had received this less perfect *baptism* from *Christ himself*.

[c] After having continued there about eight months.] This appears from ver. 35, for *harvest* began quickly after the *passover*; Lev. xxiii. 10, 15. Christ therefore staid in Judea from *one passover* till within four months of the *other*; that is near *eight months*; so that this journey into Galilee must be made near the middle of *winter*, probably about the beginning of our December. See Sir Isaac Newton on Prophecy, p. 147, 148.

SECT. XXIX.

John IV. 4.

Galilee, his former abode, where the influence and power of the council were not so great.

Now, unless he would have taken such a circuit through Judea, and the neighbouring parts, as in his present circumstances was very inconvenient, *he was obliged to go through* the 5 country of *Samaria*. *He cometh therefore*, in his way, *to a city of Samaria*, originally *called* Sichem, but now, especially by the Jews, *Sichar*; which name they used as a term of reproach,[d] intimating thereby that it was the seat of drunkards: (see Isa. xxviii. 1.) and it was *near that piece of ground which Jacob* (having purchased it of the children of Hamor, Gen. xxxiii. 19.) by a particular grant *gave to Joseph his* beloved *Son*; (compare Gen. xlviii. 6 22. and Josh. xxiv. 32.) *And there was* a well belonging to it, called *Jacob's well*; it having been used by him and his family while they dwelt in these parts; (see Gen. xxxiii. 18; xxxv. 4.) *Now Jesus being wearied with his journey, sat down immediately*[e] *by* the side of *the well*; [*and*] *it was* then *about the sixth hour*, or just high noon; so that the heat joined with the fatigue of the journey helped to increase both his thirst and faintness.[f]

7 And at this very juncture of time, *there comes a* certain *woman of Samaria to draw water*: and *Jesus* (on purpose to introduce a discourse by which he graciously intended her conversion and salvation,) *says unto her*, I desire you would 8 *give me* [*some*] *water to drink*. *For his disciples were* not near to assist him, but were *gone to the* neighbouring *city to buy food*.

9 *Then says the woman of Samaria to him, How is it that thou who art*, as appears by thy habit and dialect, *a Jew, askest drink of me, who*

and departed again into Galilee.

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well; *and* it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water; Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 For his disciples were gone away into the city to buy meat.

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it, that thou being a Jew, askest drink of me, which

[d] *A term of reproach.*] It is remarkable, as Mr. L'Enfant observes, that *Sichar* in the Syriac language signifies *a drunkard* and *a liar*.

[e] *Sat down immediately.*] Ἐκαθίζετο οὕτως, that is, *weary as he was*, says Dr. Whitby. I think Mr. Blackwall has not sufficiently proved that οὕτως sometimes signifies *therefore*, or *for this cause*, though he has attempted it in his Sacred Classics, Vol. I. p. 143, 144. The particle seems to have much the sense I have here given it, Acts xx. 11, and may often be rendered *accordingly, upon, that*, or *after which*; see Acts vii. 8; xvii. 33; xxvii. 44; and John viii. 59. Compare Elsner Observ. Vol. I. p. 303.

[f] *The heat join'd with the fatigue, &c.*] It is well known that in the latitude in which Jerusalem lies, the weather sometimes in December, is exceedingly hot at noon, even on days when the cold has been very severe in the morning.

SECT. XXIX.

John IV. 9.

am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

am a woman of Samaria? for the reader must observe, that *the Jews have no friendly intercourse with the Samaritans,*[g] nor so much as care to receive any favour from them, looking upon them as an impure and accursed nation.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

10 *Jesus,* to convince her that he was not under the power of such common prejudices, and to awaken her farther inquiries, *answered and said unto her, If thou hadst known the* great *gift of God,* which he is now bestowing upon the children of men by his Son, *and who it is that says unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest* not only have complied with his request, but wouldest ere this time *surely have asked him,*[h] *and he,* without objecting to thee on account of the people to whom thou belongest, *would* readily *have given thee living water,*[i] far better than what thou art now drawing. By which our Lord intimated his ability and readiness to communicate those influences of God's Holy Spirit, which afford the noblest refreshment to the soul, and therefore are often described by water.

11 The woman

11 But *the woman,* who understood him only in

[g] *The Jews have no friendly intercourse with the Samaritans.*] This must be the import of συγχρωνται here; for it is evident from ver. 8, that the Jews *had some dealings* with them. It has been frequently observed, that many causes concurred to occasion this inveterate hatred of the Jews to the Samaritans; such as—not only their foreign extract, and the early mixture of superstition and idolatry in their religion, (2 Kings xvii. 24—33—41.) but also the injurious manner in which they treated the Jews after their return from the captivity; (Ezra iv. 1—6; Neh. vi. 1—14)—and especially their building a *temple* on mount Gerizzim, which they made the centre of their worship, in opposition to that at Jerusalem; Joseph. Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 8.—And perhaps nothing contributed more to expose them to the contempt and abhorrence of the Jews, than that infamous offer they made to Antiochus, of dedicating that temple to Jupiter, and admitting the rites of his idolatrous worship, at a time when the Jews were suffering the utmost extremities in defence of their religion; see Joseph Antiq. lib. xii. cap. 5. (al. 7.) § 5. Havercamp.—The reader may find several passages in Whitby and Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. in loc. that express the mutual aversion of the two nations to each other.

[h] *Thou wouldest surely have asked him.*] This seems exactly to express the force of the phrase, συ αν ηιτησας αυτον.

[i] *He would have given thee living water.*] It is certain, that the phrase *living water* does in many good authors signify *spring water,* or *running water,* in opposition to that which stagnates, and so quickly grows not only *flat,* or, as we commonly express it, *dead,* but at length *corrupt;* (see Elsn. in loc. and compare Gen. xxvi. 19; Lev. xiv. 6; Jer. ii. 13.) Yet, as our Lord elsewhere in a remarkable passage recorded by this Evangelist (John vi. 51.) calls himself *living bread,* because by feeding upon him *life* is to be obtained, it seemed convenient literally to adhere to the original in this version; though I own it is very probable, this woman understood our Lord of some fine *spring water,* which flowed so easily as not to need the pains of *drawing,* and was, on this account at least, preferable to that of Jacob's well. And our Lord's reply, ver. 13, 14, shews that the simile would hold in that respect.

SECT. XXIX. John IV. 11.

a common sense, of fresh spring water, *says to him* with greater respect than before, (as being struck both with the piety and kindness of his former reply,) *Sir, thou has no bucket,*[k] nor any thing else to draw with, *and the well* before thee, which is the only spring hereabouts, *is very deep; whence hast thou then this living water*, of which thou speakest? or what is the extraordinary supply, which thou declarest may

12 be had from thee? *Art thou greater* and wiser, *than our father Jacob, who gave us this well*, leaving it to his descendants as a legacy of importance; *and* while he lived, he *drank of it himself, with his children, and his cattle*, as the best water in these parts?

13 *Jesus answered and said unto her, Whoever drinketh of this water*, how much soever it may be esteemed, though it refresh the body for a

14 little while, *will* quickly *thirst again: But he that drinketh of the water which I shall give him*, will find it so reviving to the soul, that he *will never thirst*,[l] or be in danger any more of perishing for want; *but the water which I shall give him*, will be a never failing source for his supply, and *will be in him, as a fountain of water* that will continually be *springing up*, and flowing on, *to everlasting life:* for that which I shall communicate to him, will bring him to everlasting composure and satisfaction of mind now, and will be the earnest and principle of eternal happiness.

15 *The woman*, still ignorant of his spiritual meaning, and understanding him only of natural water, *says unto him, Sir*, I claim thy promise, and desire thou wouldest *give me this* extraordinary *water, that I may not thirst* any more,

saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water that I thirst not, nei-

[k] *Thou hast no bucket.*] This, as it is the most material instrument for *drawing water*, answers the Greek αντλημα better than any English word I recollect. And we find afterwards, upon the woman's returning in haste to the city, that she left *her* water-pot or pail behind her, ver. 28, which was the vessel she had brought to draw with.—Mr. Maundrell tells us, that the well now shewn as Jacob's, is *thirty-five yards* deep. Maund. Journey to Jerusalem, p. 63.

[l] *Will never thirst.*] Some would render ου μη διψηση εις τον αιωνα, *shall not thirst for ever:* but not to urge how much this spoils the antithesis, the expression used, John vi. 35, ου μη διψηση πωποτε, is not liable to any such ambiguity. The force and truth of our Lord's assertion seems to lie in this, that the most impatient and restless desires of the soul being satisfied, when it is fixed on God as its supreme happiness, other *thirst* was not worth being mentioned; see John viii. 51, 52. § 105; John xi. 26. § 140; with the notes on those places; and John xiii. 10. § clxix.

SECT. XXIX.

John IV. 16.

ther come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband; Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

19 The woman said unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye

nor have the trouble to *come hither* daily *to draw* it, as I now do.

Jesus perceiving her ignorance, and willing to discover himself to her, in a manner that might more immediately touch her conscience, *says unto her*, *Go* home, and *call thy husband* to me, *and* then *come hither* again. *The woman*, sensible of the way in which she lived, and thinking to conceal her shame, *answered and said*, *I have no husband. Jesus says to her*, *Thou hast* answered *well*, in that thou hast *said*, *I have no husband: For* I know, that *thou hast had five husbands, and* that *he whom thou hast now* with thee, as thou hast never been lawfully married to him, *is not thy husband*:[m] in *this* respect *thou hast spoken truly* and properly.

The woman, surprised at such an extraordinary instance of his knowledge, (yet desirous at the same time, to turn off the discourse, from a subject so much to her confusion,) *says to him*, *Sir*, *I perceive*, by thy discovering the circumstances of my life so truly, though I am a perfect stranger to thee, *that thou art a prophet*; and therefore, I would gladly take this opportunity of being informed concerning that great question, which divides the Jewish and Samaritan nations.[n]

It is well known from the Mosaic writings, that *our fathers worshipped on this mountain*[o]

[m] *Is not thy husband.*] This can imply no less, than that she was *not married* to the man she lived with now, at all; for Christ seems to allow the other *five* to have been *husbands*, though her separation from some of the former, and her marriage with the rest, had probably been unlawful; which quite overthrows that argument, which Jerom would draw from hence, against the lawfulness of *marrying more than once*. See Heinsius in loc.

[n] That great question which divides the Jewish and Samaritan nations.] It is well known, and necessary to be recollected here, that Sanballat, by the permission of Alexander the Great, had built a temple upon mount Gerizim, for Manasseh his son-in-law, who, for marrying Sanballat's daughter, was expelled from the priesthood, and from Jerusalem; (see Neh. xiii. 28; and Joseph Antiq. lib. xi. cap. 8.) This was the place where the Samaritans used to worship, in opposition to Jerusalem; and it was so near Sichem, the scene of this story, that a man's voice might be heard from the one to the other; Judg. ix. 7.

[o] *Our fathers worshipped on this mountain.*] As the Samaritans pretended to deduce their genealogy from Jacob, so it is evident, that this refers to Abraham, and to Jacob, who *erected altars* in this place, (Gen. xii. 6, 7; and xxxiii. 18, 20.) and possibly to the *whole congregation*, who were directed when they came into the land of Canaan, to *put the blessing upon mount Gerizim*, Deut. xi. 29.—And though Hyrcanus the son of Simon, who succeeded his father as high priest and prince of the Jews, had long ago destroyed the temple which Sanballat built here, (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii. cap. 9. [al. 17.] § 1.) yet it is plain, that the Samaritans still resorted thither, having, no doubt, rebuilt it, though probably in a meaner manner.

SECT. XXIX. John IV. 20.

which we think a circumstance of considerable weight in our favour; *whereas you* Jews *say, that* the temple *at Jerusalem is the* great *place, where we* should all present our sacrifices unto God, and *ought to* attend upon the duties of his *worship*, and whither all the tribes are to resort three times a-year. I would beg therefore to be informed by thee in this important case, which of the two I should believe, and which is really the place most acceptable unto God.

say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

21 In answer to this case of conscience, *Jesus says to her, Woman, believe me*, and attend to what I say, *The hour is* now *coming when* this controversy shall be entirely over, and *neither on this mountain, nor at Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father*, in the same manner as ye now do; for God is going now to introduce such a pure and spiritual dispensation, as will remove all manner of distinctions as to the place in which he would be worshipped, and supersede the ceremonies practised here or there. But as to this dispute which has so long been carried on between the Jews and you, it is apparent, on the principles of the Mosaic religion, that you Samaritans are in a gross mistake; and with respect not only to the place, but in a great measure to the object also, and the manner of your services, *you worship you know not what*: whereas *we* Jews are much better instructed in these things, and *know* whom, and on *what* authority, *we worship; for* truly the *salvation* God has promised to his people *is* to arise *from the Jews*, and the way of obtaining it is with the greatest advantage to be learnt among them. *Nevertheless*, as I said before, I assure you again, *the hour approaches, and now is* just arrived, *when the true* and acceptable *worshippers shall worship the* great *Father* of all, not with these external rites on which you lay so much stress, but *in spirit and in truth*,[p] or in a more devotional and rational

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth:

[p] *Worship the Father in spirit and in truth.*] *Truth* is elsewhere opposed to types and ceremonies, John i. 14, 17. Heb. viii. 2; ix. 24. This important sentiment, as likewise what is said in ver. 24, is well illustrated by many fine quotations from ancient writers by Grotius, in loc. And all that know any thing of that learned commentator, know that he has a thousand rich collections of this kind, which do a great honour to scripture, by illustrating its superior beauties; but it would be quite foreign to the design of this work either to transcribe such collections, or to attempt any supplement to them.

for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

manner, to which these corporeal and typical ordinances must soon give way; *for the Father seeketh such to worship him*, as that kind of homage is most suited to his own nature, as well as peculiarly delightful and useful to the pious mind. For *God is* himself *a* pure *Spirit; and* therefore, *they that worship him, ought to worship* him *in spirit and in truth:* and as some degree of spirituality and sincerity is necessary under every dispensation, you need not wonder, if at length he set aside those external rites, which were never principally regarded by him.

24 God *is* a Spirit; and they that worship him, must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

24

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

The woman saith unto him, I know that the Messiah, who is called Christ, is coming, and will soon appear; [*and*] *when he is* actually *come, he will* undoubtedly *teach us all* these sublime truths at which you have been hinting, and whatever other *things* it is necessary for us to know.[q]

25

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee, am *he*.

Upon her mentioning this, as *Jesus* was not apprehensive of those inconveniencies here, which might have attended such an open acknowledgment among the Jews,[r] he plainly and directly *tells her* in so many words, *I that am* now *speaking to thee, am he:* a declaration which, no doubt, she heard with great amazement: but before she could answer him, the disciples appeared, which for the present put an end to the conference.

26

[q] *Teach us all things* it is necessary for us to know.] This (as well as ver. 29, 42,) plainly proves, both that the Samaritans expected the Messiah and that they concluded he would be a prophet.

[r] Not apprehensive of those inconveniencies here which might have attended such an open acknowledgment among the Jews.] That Christ was very cautious of acknowledging himself to be the promised Messiah, in his conversing with the Jews is very apparent; (compare Mat. xvi. 20; Mark viii. 29, 30; Luke xxii. 67; and John x. 24.) and the reason was, that the Jews had such notions of the *temporal kingdom* of the Messiah, that they would have construed an open declaration of himself under that character, as a claim to the *throne of David;* in consequence of which, many would have taken up arms in the cause, (John vi. 15.) and others would have accused him to the Roman governor, as a rebel against Cæsar (Luke xx. 20,) as they afterwards did, Luke xxiii. 2.—This Mr. Locke has stated at large in his Reasonableness of Christianity, p. 59—77. Yet I think there was a nicety in Christ's conduct, beyond what is there represented: for our Lord in effect declared the thing, while he declined that particular title; and, in a multitude of places, represents himself as the Son of man and the Son of God, which were both equivalent phrases and generally understood by the Jews, though a Roman would not so easily have entered into the force of them. Accordingly we find this interpretation was in fact given to them. John vii. 31—41; and ix. 22.

SECT. XXIX.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 6, 9

CONDESCENDING and compassionate *Redeemer!* who would thus graciously converse with a *Samaritan*, with a woman of an infamous reputation too, from whom, on various accounts, a haughty *Pharisee* would have turned away, in proud disdain! and could forget his *thirst*, pressing as that appetite is, that he might instruct and lead her to the *waters of life!*

10 Gracious *gift of God* to the children of men! how noble and how lasting a delight does it administer! Let it be our language,
15 *Lord, evermore give us this living water!* Oh, pour out this enlivening *spirit* on us, which alone can allay the *thirst* of our
13 souls, and give us that lasting satisfaction, which we in vain would seek from these *broken cisterns*, from these precarious
14 streams; till at length the *fountain springs up* in Paradise, and flows on to *life everlasting!*

May this good *spirit* anticipate those immortal delights to our
23 souls, by leading us into that *spirituality of worship* which the nature of God demands, and which the gospel dispensation is so eminently calculated to promote! Let it be inscribed on our
24 hearts that *God is a Spirit;* and let it teach us *to worship him in Spirit and in truth. Such worshippers the Father seeks;* such may he ever find in us!

May all intemperate zeal for matters of doubtful disputation,
20, 21 all sentiments of bigotry and severity against our brethren, be happily swallowed up in this infinitely greater concern! and while others contend about *places* and *forms* of worship, may we pour out *our hearts* before him, and feel the *love of God* and man, *shed abroad in them, by his Spirit given unto us!* (Rom v. 5.)

SECT. XXX.

Christ's discourse with his disciples at Jacob's well: his visit to the Samaritans, and their regards to him. John IV. 27—42.

JOHN IV. 27.

SECT. XXX.

John IV. 27.

THUS expressly did Jesus declare to the woman of Samaria, that he was the Messiah; *and* immediately *upon this, his disciples*, (who, as was said before, were gone into the city to buy food,) *came* to this well, where Jesus had appointed them to meet him; *and* they *wondered that he was* thus *talking* in so friendly a manner *with the woman*,[a] whom they knew to be

JOHN IV. 27.

AND upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman; yet no

[a] *With the woman*, μετα γυναικος.] As *woman*; and Dr. Lightfoot, in his note on the article is wanting, the Prussian Testament, and many others, render it *with a* this place, has produced a great many unaccountable, and some of them very

man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

one of that nation so peculiarly obnoxious to the Jews. But though it gave them some uneasiness, *yet* they had such a reverence for him, that *none* of them *said*, *What dost thou seek* from this Samaritan? *or why dost thou talk with her?*

SECT. XXX. John IV. 27.

28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

Then the woman, seeing other company coming up to interrupt the discourse, immediately *left her water-pot* or pail behind her, as her thoughts were taken up with matters of far greater importance: *and went away* in haste *to the* neighbouring *city*, *and says to the men* of

28

29 Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

her acquaintance there, *Come* directly to Jacob's well, and you may there *see a* wonderful *man*, *who has told me*, in a manner, *all that ever I did*, even some of the most secret circumstances of my past life: *is not this the* expected *Messiah?* I assure you it seems exceeding probable to me that he is; and he himself has told me so in so many words.

29

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

They therefore, struck with so great a name, in concurrence with so strange an event, *went* in great numbers *out of the city*, *and came to him*, who still continued where the woman left him.

30

31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

In the mean time, *the disciples intreated him* to refresh himself, *saying*, *Rabbi*, *eat* of the provisions we have brought thee.[b]

31

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

But he, referring to the conversation he had lately had with the woman, and to the preparation making for the conversion of the Samaritans, *said unto them*, with an air of great satisfaction, *I have meat to eat*, *that ye know not of*, which gives me a much better entertainment, than you can bring me.

32

33 Therefore said the disciples one to

The disciples therefore, not understanding his words in that spiritual sense in which he intended them, *said one to another* with some sur-

33

stupid passages, from the Talmud and other Rabbinical writers, to prove that it was reckoned scandalous for a man of distinction *to talk publicly with a woman*; (see Lightfoot's Hor. Hebra. in loc.) But the disciples surely knew that Jacob and Moses, and others of their greatest and holiest prophets, had done it; and some of them in circumstances remarkably resembling this, in which the *woman came to draw water*; compare Gen. xxix. 9—12; Exod. ii. 15—17. (See also 1 Sam. ix. 11—14) It is plain the *wonder* here was, that he talked with a Samaritan. —As for the omission of the article, see note [b] on John i. 1. p. 24, and the end of note [d] in this section, on John iv. 36.

[b] *Eat* of the provisions we have brought thee.] Their bringing back the provisions to him here, makes it probable that he did not intend, had it not been on this occasion, to have gone into the town; and so (as it was said in the paraphrase, ver. 27.) ordered his disciples to meet him at this place, which was undoubtedly well known to travellers.

SECT. XXX. John IV. 33.

prise, considering where he was, *Has any one* been with him in our absence, and *brought him* any [*food*] *to eat* here? *Jesus*, who knew the loss they were at to understand his meaning,
34 *says*, to explain it *to them*, *My* most refreshing and delightful *food is to do the will of him that sent me* into the world, *and to finish his work* as fast as possible, in the conversion of souls, and in the propagation of his kingdom; and I with pleasure can assure you that it is now going on
35 successfully. *Do not you say, that there are yet four months, and harvest cometh?*[c] Nay but *behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes* even now, *and survey the fields* round about you; *for they are already* laden with a plentiful crop, and appear *white unto the harvest:* alluding to the disposition of the people in general, and more particularly to the multitude of Samaritans, who, struck with the report of the woman, were coming to inquire after him as the Messiah; and unto whom he pointed, and directed them to look, as being then within their view.
36 *And* he yet farther added, It is your happiness to be employed in such a work as this; for *he that* faithfully *reaps* the harvest, of which I now speak, *receiveth* far more valuable *wages* than men can give, *and* has the great additional satisfaction of thinking, that he *gathers in the fruit unto eternal life:*[d] *so that*, on this account,

another, Hath any man brought him *ought* to eat?

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he

[c] *There are yet four months, and harvest cometh.*] Dr. Whithy and Grotius, and many others, understand this, as if our Lord had said, "It is a *proverbial* expression for the encouragement of husbandmen, that there are but *four months* between *seed-time* and *harvest*." And the author of the late English translation therefore renders it (in his paraphrastic manner,) *You commonly say, Yather four months, and the harvest will come.* But I cannot acquiesce in this interpretation: (1.) Because none of the learned writers mentioned above, nor Dr. Lightfoot, who is large on this text, could produce any such proverb. (2.) Because indeed there could be no foundation for it, since the distance between *seed-time* and *harvest* must differ, according to the different kinds of grain in question. And (3.) Because if there had been such a proverb, it would have been improper to apply it here; since our Lord was not speaking of the period of time between *the prophets sowing*, and *the apostles reaping* (to which *four months* has no analogy;) but only means to tell them, that though they reckoned yet *four months* to the *earthly harvest*, the *spiritual harvest* was *now ripe*. So that I chuse, as Sir Isaac Newton does, to take the words in their plainest sense, as an intimation that it was then *four months* to the beginning of *harvest*; see note [c] on ver. 3. p. 167. And I take this passage to be of very great importance for settling the chronology of Christ's ministry.

[d] *Gathers in the fruit unto eternal life.*] I apprehend our Lord's thought here to have been more comprehensive, than commentators have been aware. He seems to compare the case of a Christian minister to that of a considerate *reaper*, who is supported in his fatigue, not only by a regard to his own *wages*, but to the advantage which the public

SECT. XXX.

John IV. 36.

that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together.

both he that sows, and he that reaps, may rejoice together; and those souls, to whose salvation they have in different ways contributed, will be to both, a crown of honour, and objects of everlasting complacency and delight.

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

For in this sense it may be justly said, that 37 *herein is that* proverbial *saying* remarkably *true, One soweth and another reapeth;* for after he has sown his field, it often happens, that a man dies, before he gathers in the harvest, and so leaves it to another, who enjoys the advantage of his pains. And thus it is, that *I* 38 have *sent you* forth *to reap* the fruit of *that, on which you have not laboured,* either to till or sow the ground; the prophets and other holy men of former ages, having toiled, as it were, to cultivate the field, and thereby made your work a great deal easier than it would otherwise have been. So that the success of my preaching this day in your absence, is an emblem of what God has wisely ordered in the course of his Providence: *others have laboured, and you are entered into* the field, on which *their labour* has been carefully employed.[e] Let this engage you therefore, to apply yourselves in earnest to your work, with a becoming spirit, and a ready cheerfulness.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him, for the saying of the woman which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

Now when the woman had informed the peo- 39 ple of the discourse which she had had with Jesus, *many of the Samaritans from that city believed on him,* as some extraordinary person, *by reason of that saying of the woman, who testified* concerning him, *he told me all that ever I did. When therefore the Samaritans* had 40 heard the wonderful account the woman gave of Jesus, and *were come* with her to the well *to see him,* they were so taken with the manner of his deportment, and the strain of his discourses, that *they entreated him to tarry with them* for some time, as being desirous of a farther acquaintance with him, and of receiving farther benefit from his instructions: *and,* ready to lay

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

receive by the *harvest* he gathers in. This the expression συναγει καρπον εις ζωην αιωνιον seems plainly to import, and so is nearly parallel to Jam. v. 20, and suggests a most forcible consideration, to diligence and zeal.—Καρπον here seems to be put for τον καρπον, *the fruit,* that is, *the souls* he gathers in.

[e] The field on which *their labour* has been employed.] This seems the signification of καπον here, as Grotius well proves. Compare 2 Cor. x. 15.

SECT. XXX. John IV. 41.

hold of every opportunity of doing good, *he* went with them to their city, and *continued there two days.*[f] *And* there were *many more*, who in this time *believed* on him,[g] *on account of his own discourse*, which they might also see confirmed by some extraordinary works. *And* they *said to the woman, Now we believe*, and that *not* merely, nor yet chiefly, *on account of what thou hast spoken* of him; *for we ourselves have heard him* teach, and have examined his credentials; *and*, by the most convincing evidence, we *know that this is really the Christ, the Saviour of the world*,[h] even the expected Messiah, and are determined to regard him as such.

41 And many more believed, because of his own word:

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 34

LET us behold with pleasure, the glorious example of our blessed *Redeemer*, and learn to imitate his zeal. It was *his meat and drink* to pursue *his Father's work*; to glorify God, and do good to souls: and ought it not to be *ours?* Let us bless God, for every opportunity of applying to it, and every field of service, which Providence opens to us.

Let *gospel ministers*, especially, be thankful, for all that hath 38 been done to introduce their services, not only by the ministrations of the *prophets* under the *Old Testament*, but by the *apostles* also under the *New*, and by succeeding *servants of Christ* in every age of the church. In this sense, with regard to us, is 37 that *proverb* true, *One soweth, and another reapeth.* We have *entered into the labours of others:* may others in time enter into ours! May the work be delivered over from one faithful hand to another, and be carried on by each with growing zeal and success! 36 Blessed time, when all the *workmen* shall meet and join their songs; and each of the souls *gathered into eternal life*, shall be,

[f] *Continued there two days.*] This was a proper medium, between entirely neglecting them, and giving them so much of his time and company, as would have broken in upon the design of his journey into Galilee, or might have given umbrage to the Jews.

[g] *Many more believed* on him.] This was the more extraordinary, as they not only had a national prejudice against him as a Jew, but, living near Mount Gerizim, had a particular interest in maintaining the usual worship there, which must be very advantageous to the neighbourhood. Perhaps on this they would no longer worship there, which might irritate the rest of the Samaritans, and might in part provoke the ill usage, that Christ afterwards met with in this country. Luke ix. 52, 53.

[h] *The Saviour of the world.*] They might probably collect from what was prophesied by Jacob of the Messiah, Gen. xlix. 10, *To him shall the gathering of the people be*, that the *Gentile nations* were to receive some benefit by the Messiah's coming, and one way or another to be subjected to him; and Christ's discourse might confirm that apprehension: but there is no reason at all to believe, they perfectly understood the doctrine of the *calling of the idolatrous Gentiles*, which was so long a *mystery* even to the *apostles* themselves.

to all concerned in their conversion, or edification, an ornament of glory, and a source of pleasure! SECT. XXX.

Surely, if we *know Christ* ourselves, we shall, like this *woman of Samaria*, be solicitous to communicate the knowledge to others, and shall sometimes forget our little *worldly interests*, to attend to this vast superior care. May we *believe in him*, not merely on the report and *testimony of others*, but on our own *experience*; that, having *tasted that the Lord is gracious*, we may bear a more lively and effectual testimony to him! Verse 29, 28, 41, 42

Let us watchfully observe the leadings of Providence, and whatever our own schemes may have been, let us still adjust our conduct by the intimations of present duty; and, especially where we have reason to believe, that God is by his *Spirit* beginning to work on men's hearts, let us be ambitious of being *workers together with him*. *A word spoken in* such a *season is* remarkably *good*, and it is a great part of Christian and ministerial prudence, to observe, and improve those tender times. 40

SECT. XXXI.

Christ comes from Samaria into Galilee; and while at Cana cures a nobleman's son, who lay at the point of death in Capernaum, Mark I. 14, 15. Mat. IV. 12. John IV. 43, *to the end.*

MARK I. 14.

NOW after that John was put in prison, [when Jesus had heard that—he departed, *and*] came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God; [MAT. IV. 12.]

MARK I. 14.

NOW after John was cast into prison, and Jesus had heard [*of it*] in Judea where he then was, *he withdrew* from thence [*and*] *came into Galilee*[a] (as was said before, John iv. 3, sect. 29.) being willing to take the advantage of those impressions, which the ministry of John might have made on the minds of the people there, who had so signal an esteem for him; an esteem, which would be heightened, rather than abated by the injurious things which they saw him suffer. Jesus came therefore into that country,[b] *preaching the good news of the king-* SECT. XXXI. Mark I. 14.

[a] *After John was cast into prison Jesus withdrew and came into Galilee.*] It is strange that Mr. Whiston, and some others should represent it as an argument against the order, we have followed here; that it would have been imprudent, and inconvenient for Christ to have gone immediately into Herod's territories, just after he had seized John; when two of the evangelists assure us, this was the very *reason* of his journey. The cause of *John's imprisonment* was particular; and the reasons assigned in the paraphrase seem considerable, besides that already mentioned, John iv. 1—3. See note [2], p. 167.

[b] Jesus came therefore into that country.] Mr. Le Clerc supposes, (in his Harmony, p. 75.) that Jesus went from Sichar directly to Nazareth, and that this visit

SECT. XXXI.

dom of God, which was speedily to be erected by the Messiah, whom God had appointed to raise and govern it; *And saying*, Behold, *the time* fixed by the ancient prophets *is* now *fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is near*; see to it therefore that you cordially *repent* of all your sins, *and believe the gospel*, which I publish to you, that you may secure an interest in the blessings of it.

Mark I. 15.

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel.

John IV. 43. *And* having been prevailed upon (as we have seen before,) to stop at Sichar in his way, *after* he had continued there *two days* with the Samaritans, *he departed* from *thence, and went* (as has been just now said) *into Galilee*. And he chose to make a journey through a considerable part of it, before he returned to Nazareth, that the reputation he gained elsewhere, might be some balance to those prejudices, which the inhabitants of that place would naturally entertain against him: *for Jesus himself testified, that a prophet has no honour in his own country*;[c] where those that knew him in his childhood and youth, can hardly be persuaded to look upon him with the reverence due to a messenger from God.

JOHN IV. 43. Now after two days he departed thence, [*that is, from Sichar,*] and went into Galilee.

44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

45 *When therefore he came into Galilee, the Galileans received* and entertained *him* with a great deal of pleasure; (compare Luke iv. 14, 15.) for many of them had been witnesses to his surprising miracles, *having seen all the* wonderful *things that he did at Jerusalem during the feast* of the passover, *(for they also came to the feast,)* and they had now an expectation of seeing some of them renewed. *Jesus, therefore*, encouraged by this readiness of theirs to attend

45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem, at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

46 So Jesus came

which he made to Cana, (at ver. 46.) was some time after he was expelled from Nazareth, and had dwelt at Capernaum. But that he took a circuit elsewhere before he went to Nazareth, is certain from John iv. 43, 44, compared with Luke iv. 14—16. And though we cannot positively say, whether the visit to Cana was made in this first journey, or in the other which is mentioned afterwards, (Luke iv. 44; Mat. iv. 23; and Mark i. 38, 39, § 36.) yet I have introduced it here, because John mentions it immediately after his coming from Sichar; and it has been a maxim with me in this work, to take all the stories and discourses in the *order* they lie, if there be not, (from other evangelists,) a plain reason for *transposing* them.

[c] *For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet has no honour in his own country.*] There is no manner of occasion here, to render *γαρ*, *although*; for it is plain, that this is spoken as the reason, why he rather chose, to travel into those parts of Galilee, and not to go directly to Nazareth; which is particularly called *his own country*, in distinction from Galilee, and even from Capernaum, Luke iv. 23.

again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine.

And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death.

48 Then said Jesus unto him Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And

his ministry, pursued his journey till he *came again to Cana of Galilee;* which was the place, *where he* before *had made the water wine.* SECT. XXXI.

And while he stayed at Cana, *there was a certain nobleman* belonging to King Herod's court,[d] *whose son was* dangerously *ill at Capernaum; [Who] when he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, went* in person at least a day's journey[e] cross the country *to him, and* earnestly *entreated him that he would come down* to Capernaum, *and cure his son, for he was* given over by the physicians, and seemed *just ready to die.* John IV. 46. 47

Jesus said therefore unto him, and them that were about him, I perceive that, though the Samaritans shewed so great a regard to my word, and the report of my miracles, *unless you see* with your own eyes some remarkable and repeated *signs and wonders, you will not believe;* thereby justly reproving him and them, for that mixture of suspicion and slowness of faith, which he discerned in their minds.[f] 48

The nobleman, weak as his faith was, determined nevertheless to urge the matter to the utmost; and therefore, without any explication or apology on that head, *says to him, Sir,* I beseech thee to *come down before my child die;* for the case is so extreme, that a delay may be attended with the most fatal consequences. Upon which, *Jesus,* to shew that it was not necessary for him to go in person to accomplish the cure, *says to him, Go thy way* home, for I assure thee, that *thy son* is living, and at this instant, 49 50

[d] *A certain nobleman* belonging to king Herod's court.] Though Herod was only tetrarch of Galilee, yet was he commonly distinguished by the title of King; (see Mat. xiv. 9; and Mark vi. 14; sect. 77.) and as Capernaum lay in his dominions, it is probable that this was one belonging to his court, who was *a nobleman* of some distinction. For this is properly the signification of βασιλικος; which the Syriac and Arabic versions render *a minister,* or *servant of the king;* and many have conjectured, that the person who is here spoken of, was Chuza, Herod's *steward,* whose *wife* is thought to have been converted on this occasion, and became afterwards an attendant on Christ. Luke viii. 3.

[e] At least a day's journey.] This may be very fairly inferred from ver. 52, as well as from the accounts the best geographers give of the situation of Cana and Capernaum.

[f] Reproving him and them, for that mixture of suspicion &c.] It is necessary to suppose some such reference to illustrate the justice of this reproof; for in the general it was very reasonable to expect, that Christ should *work miracles* in proof of his divine mission, as he himself does plainly intimate elsewhere; see John xv. 24. Who can tell, but the very person now applying to him, might have made some such declaration, that he would never *believe* such things, till he *saw* them with his own eyes? Christ might mean by this reflection to humble him, and to shew him a specimen of his extraordinary knowledge, as well as power.

SECT. XXXI.

while I am speaking to thee, *is recovered* from his illness. *And the man*, though he had never seen, or heard of a parallel case,[g] *believed the word that Jesus spoke unto him, and went away* without any farther importunity.

John IV. 50.

the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

51 *Now* the day after he had taken his leave of Jesus, *as he was going down* to Capernaum, some of *his servants met him* on the road, eager to bring him such acceptable news, *and told* [*him*,] *saying*, *Thy son* who was so dangerously ill, *is* now *recovered*. And *therefore*, to compare it with the account that Jesus gave, *he* presently *inquired of them*, what was *the hour when he began to mend: and they said unto him*, *Yesterday at the seventh hour*, or at one in the afternoon, *the fever left him* at once, and he grew well on a sudden. *The father therefore knew*, *that* [*it was*] *at the very hour in which Jesus said to him*, *Thy son is recovered*: *and* when he came to reflect on the astonishing circumstances of the case, *he and his whole family believed* that the person by whom so convincing and beneficent a miracle was wrought, must be, not only as he before supposed, some great prophet, but even the Messiah himself.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth.

52 Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend: and they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

53 So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

54 *This is again the second miracle which Jesus performed* at Cana; and he wrought it *when he came out of Judea into Galilee*; a circumstance in which it agreed with the former.[h]

54 This *is* again the second miracle that Jesus did when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.

IMPROVEMENT.

John IV. 44.

How unreasonable are the passions and prejudices of mankind, and this in particular, that *a prophet* should have *no honour in his own country!* One would have imagined, that *Jesus* at least, free as he was from all the follies of childhood and youth, should have been an exception; nay, indeed, that he should have been peculiarly honoured there, where his early wisdom and piety could not but be observed.

43 *Our Lord* however intended them a visit, even at *Nazareth*; and it is the duty of his *ministers*, to bear their testimony, *whe-*

[g] Though he had never seen or heard of a parallel case.] It is plain he had heard of *Christ's miracles*, but this is the *first* recorded, in which he cured the patient *at a distance*, and probably was hitherto in this respect unequalled.

[h] A circumstance in which it agreed with the former.] Compare John i. 48. and ii. 1. That the words must be taken with such a limitation, evidently appears from what John had before said of the many *miracles* which Christ had already wrought elsewhere; see John ii. 23. and iii. 2.

ther men will hear, or whether they will forbear. Yet should they learn of their great Master, to study as much as they can, to obviate those prejudices which might prevent their usefulness, and should use the most prudent and gentle methods to vanquish them. SECT. XXXI.

Such was this beneficial *miracle of our Lord;* which may afford us many particulars worthy of our notice. With what affection and zeal, does this tender *parent* apply to *Christ*, on the sickness of *his child!* Let us not be less importunate, when soliciting spiritual blessings in behalf of our dear offspring: and so much the rather, as *their lives* are so precarious, and we know not how soon these lovely *flowers* may be cut down, and all farther petitions for them be for ever superseded. Verse 47 49

Our Lord, while *at a distance* from the patient, wrought and perfected the cure. And has he not still the same divine power, though he does not exert it in the same miraculous way? Let not his *bodily absence* abate our faith, while praying for others or for ourselves. 50, 51

Salvation now *came to this house*, and blessings infinitely more valuable, than noble blood, or ample possessions, or royal favour, or recovered health could give; for *the cure* wrought in the *body of one*, was a means of producing *faith* in the *hearts of all.* Blessed *Jesus!* thy power was no less employed in the latter, than in the former. Oh may that power work in such a manner on our souls, as that we all may be disposed, cordially to receive thee, and cheerfully to venture our *eternal all* upon thee! May *we and our houses* concur in so wise and happy a resolution; and not insisting upon *evidence* beyond what thy gracious wisdom has thought fit to give us, may we candidly receive the light we have, and faithfully improve it so, as to be at length entitled to the *blessedness* of those *who have not seen, and yet have believed!* (John xx. 29.) 53 48

SECT. XXXII.

Christ preaching at Nazareth is at first admired, but immediately after rejected: the people there making an attempt upon his life, he leaves them, and comes to Capernaum. Luke IV. 14—30.

LUKE IV. 14.

AND Jesus returned in the power LUKE IV. 14.

IT has already been observed, that after John the Baptist was imprisoned, *and Jesus* was acquainted with it, he left Judea, and *returned into Galilee;* and from what follows it will be plainly seen, that he went thither under the SECT. XXXII. Luke IV. 14.

SECT. XXXII. Luke IV. 14.

guidance, and *in the power of the Spirit*;[a] for as a mighty impulse on his own mind determined him to undertake the journey, so an amazing divine energy attended his progress through it; *and his renown* was spread abroad, as soon as he arrived in Galilee, and *went through all*

15 *the neighbouring region. And*, ready to embrace all opportunities that offered to instruct the people, *he* went from place to place, and *taught in their synagogues, with universal* admiration and *applause.*[b]

16 *And* having thus prepared his way, *he came* at length *to Nazareth, where* it has been observed before, (Mat. ii. 23, and Luke ii. 51.) that *he was educated; and according to his custom*, which he constantly observed there and elsewhere, *he entered into the synagogue on the sabbath-day; and* out of regard to the high reputation he had lately gained, being desired by the ruler of it to officiate,[c] he *stood up to read* the scriptures, which made a constant part of their public worship; (see Acts xv. 21.)

17 *And the book of Isaiah the prophet was delivered to him*, a paragraph of the law having been read before; *and unrolling* the volume of *the book*,[d] *he found that place* of it, (Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3.)

18 *where it was written* to this effect;[e] "*The*

of the Spirit into Galilee, and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias: And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18 The Spirit of

[a] *In the power of the Spirit.*] It seems a very wild thought of Mr. Fleming's, that this intimates, Christ was transported through the air hither, after his *temptation* in the wilderness; See Flem. Christol. Vol. II. p. 315.

[b] *With universal applause* δοξαζομενος υπο παντων.] Our translation, which has rendered it *being glorified in all*, is indeed more literal: but *to glorify a preacher* is an uncommon phrase in English; and that I have used is so plainly equivalent to the other in signification, that I hope it may be allowed as very just.

[c] *Being desired by the ruler of it to officiate.*] One cannot but be amazed at the ignorance of Suidas, in arguing from hence, that Christ was a *priest*. It is well known that any man of gravity and reputation might, at the request of the ruler, officiate on such occasions; compare Acts xiii. 15.

[d] *Unrolling* the volume of *the book.*] So αναπτυξας properly signifies; and I chuse to retain it, that the *form* of the books then used may thus be recollected: they were, as the copies of the Old Testament in the Jewish synagogues now are, *long scrolls of parchment*, that were rolled upon two sticks. The reader may see an excellent account of them in Mr. Jer. Jones's Vindication of St. Matthew's Gospel. chap. xv. p. 151—170. And this form of their book shews, in the most convincing manner, how improbable such *transpositions* are as those learned harmonizers, Mr. Whiston and Mr. Manne, make the foundation of their respective hypothesis.

[e] *It was written* to this effect.] It is evident that the *quotation*, as it stands here, does neither exactly agree with the Hebrew nor the Septuagint. The many *old copies* in which that clause ιασασθαι τους συντετριμμενους την καρδιαν, *to heal the broken hearted*, is wanting, has inclined many learned *critics*, with Grotius, to suppose it added from the Hebrew; but one would rather conclude that Christ read the passage as it was, and that these words might accidentally be dropped by some early *transcriber*.

SECT. XXXII.

Luke IV. 18.

the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

" *Spirit of the Lord is upon me* in an abundant degree *for the* important *purpose to which he hath anointed me*,[f] and solemnly set me apart; and important indeed it is, [*for*] *he hath sent me to preach good news to the poor* and afflicted,[g] *to heal those whose hearts are broken* with sorrow, *to proclaim* free *dismission to* wretched *captives, even the recovery of sight to them that are blind* in prison; [*and*] *to set those at liberty who are bruised* with the heavy load of their fetters:[h] In a word, *to proclaim*, as by the sound of a trumpet, *that welcome year of the Lord*,[i] which the year of jubilee, pleasing and grateful as it is, can but imperfectly represent, though debts are then forgiven, and slaves released, and inheritances restored to their original owners."

19

20 And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down; and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

20 *And having rolled up the book*, which was a long scroll of parchment, *he delivered it to the servant* of the synagogue whose proper office it was to take care of it; *and* then, according to the custom of the Jewish rabbies, *sat down* to preach, (see Mat. v. 1: xxiii. 1, 3; xxvi. 55; and John viii. 2.) *and the eyes of all in the synagogue were attentively fixed upon him*, as they were very curious to know what he would

[f] *For the purpose to which he hath anointed me; ου εκεκεν εχρισε με.*] It is very difficult to explain the *connection* of the *two clauses* in this passage, if we render ου ενεκεν either *because*, or *therefore*; and I cannot recollect that it ever signifies *because*. But the *translation* I propose, seems to remove the difficulty; see Acts xix. 32.

[g] *Poor* and afflicted.] Grotius well observes that it is probable *some copies* might read עניים ANIIM, *the poor*, instead of ענוים ANAWIM, *the meek*, which is the word made use of in Isaiah. And as to that clause of *restoring sight to the blind*, which is omitted in Isaiah, I am not able to determine whether our Lord in his discourse borrowed this clause from Isa. xlii. 7. by way of illustration; or whether (as Dr. Prideaux supposes in his Connection, Vol. II. p. 547.) it was taken from some Chaldee Targum, which is now lost.

[h] *Sight to them that are blind, and to set those at liberty who are bruised.*] It is beautifully observed by the judicious Mr. Cradock in his excellent book on the Evangelists, that the former clause seems an *allusion* to the wretched state of those *prisoners* who, according to the inhuman custom still retained in the *eastern countries*, had *their eyes put out*: and with regard to such as these, this Great Deliverer is represented as *restoring them*, a work far beyond all human power. See Cradock's Harm. p. 69.—I take them to be the same with those who are spoken of in the next clause as *bruised* with the weight of their *fetters*; for it is plain, that even *blind captives* were sometimes loaded with them; as was the case with Samson, Judges xvi. 21; and with Zedekiah, 2 Kings xxv. 7.

[i] *That welcome year of the Lord.*] It is strange that any *ancient* or *modern* writers should argue from hence that *Christ's ministry* lasted but *one year*, or a little more. One might as well plead, from 2 Cor. vi. 2. that *the day of salvation* included but *one natural day*.—Here is a plain *allusion* to the *Jubilee*; compare Lev. xxv. 9, 10; and Psal. lxxxix. 15.

SECT. XXXII.

Luke IV. 21.

say on a scripture which seemed so plainly to refer to the Messiah.[k]

And he began to speak at large from this excellent and suitable passage; and the main tendency and purport of his discourse was *to say to them, To-day this scripture* I have now been reading *is* remarkably *fulfilled in your hearing*; for I am the person foretold under this character, and sent with such ample powers to fulfil these purposes of the Divine mercy.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

22 *And*, strong as their prejudices were against him, *they all*, by their very countenances (see Job xxix. 11.) *bore* their *testimony to him* as a most excellent preacher, *and were astonished at those graceful* as well as comfortable *words* [l] *which proceeded out of his mouth*; so that they could not forbear *saying* to each other, even while he spoke, *Is not this* he that was brought up among us, *the son of Joseph* the carpenter? And if it be, how is it possible that a man of so mean an education should be able to discourse thus excellently well?

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

23 *And he said to them*, farther, *You will undoubtedly say to me* in the words of *that* common *proverb, Physician, cure thyself*; [*and*] for the satisfaction of thy own relations and neighbours, if thou art really so extraordinary a person, *do also here* at home, *in thine own country, those* miraculous *works which*, as *we have heard, were done at Capernaum*, and elsewhere.[m] *But* to expose the vanity of this sug-

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

[k] *A scripture which seemed so plainly to refer to the Messiah.*] Though many *commentators* of note apply Isa. lxi. 1. to the *good news* of the dismission of the Jews from Babylon, I refer it to the impartial reader to judge whether it be not much more probable that ver. 4, 5, 6, (where the *prophet* speaks of *repairing the waste cities, planting vineyards*, &c.) may be either meant in a *spiritual sense*, or literally predict the *temporal prosperity of the church* after the *conversion of the Jews*, that Christ should mistake the true *sense* of the text, or build his argument on a mere *allusion*; see Dr. Sykes's Vindication of Christianity, p. 25, and Jeffery's True Grounds, p. 120.

[l] *Astonished at those graceful words.*] The phrase in the original λογοις της χαριτος, literally signifies *words of grace*; which, it is probable, may refer to the *agreeable manner* of Christ's discourse, as well as to the *matter* of it: and as they could not but take notice of the majesty and grace with which he spoke, so it must naturally fill them with *astonishment*, considering the meanness of his birth and education; see Elsner, in loc.

[m] *Capernaum, and elsewhere.*] It is strange that Dr. Clarke and many others should lay so much stress as they do on this, as an argument to prove that this visit to Nazareth was made after that to Capernaum, in which *those miracles* were wrought which are recorded Mark i. 21—34, and Luke iv. 33—41, (sect. xxxv. xxxvi.) when Luke himself so plainly says that *he came down from Nazareth to Capernaum*, and then gives an account of *those miracles* (Luke iv. 30. &c. *seq.*) and Matthew also introduces the history of them with saying (Mat. iv. 13),

SECT. XXXII.

Luke IV. 24

24 And he said, Verily, I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country,

gestion, *he* went on and *said*, *Verily I say unto you, that no prophet is acceptable in his own country*, (compare John iv. 44, page 180.) and therefore I know that you who have been acquainted with me from my infancy will, through envy and prejudice, refuse me an opportunity of working such miracles, and would indeed be still as obstinate and unbelieving as before, if you should see them. *But* let it be remembered by you that God sometimes punishes men for this unreasonable temper, by directing his prophets to confer those favours on strangers, of which their countrymen and neighbours have rendered themselves so unworthy. For thus *I tell you as a* certain *truth*, which well deserves your consideration, That *there were many* poor *widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was*, as it were, *shut up for three years and six months*,[n] *so that* there was no rain, and *a great famine prevailed in all the land: And* yet *Elijah was sent to none of them* with a miraculous supply of meal and oil, *but to a widow woman at Sarepta*, [*a*

25 But I tell you of a truth, Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.

that *leaving Nazareth he came and dwelt at Capernaum*.—We are expressly told by John that Jesus, after the miracle which he wrought at Cana in Galilee, went with his mother and his brethren and disciples to Capernaum, and continued some time, though not very long there, (John ii. 12. sect. xxiv); and it is very possible he might visit it again in his passing through Galilee, (John iv. 43, 44, sect. xxxi.) which if he did after the *cure* wrought on the *nobleman's son* there (which undoubtedly preceded this visit to Nazareth), he would certainly meet with some extraordinary regard, as the *cure* was performed *at a distance*, and many other miracles might then be wrought there: so that this passage may refer to these and other *miracles* not particularly recorded by Luke; as we have seen before that John refers to others (John ii. 23; and iii. 2) which neither he himself had mentioned, nor indeed any of the rest of the *evangelists*.—If it be asked why Christ did not perform such miracles *here* as elsewhere? we answer—that this whole discourse is intended to prove that God might dispense these extraordinary favours as he pleased;—and they do not appear to have *brought their sick* to him, and seem to have suspected his power, (compare Mat. xiii. 58; and Mark vi. 5. sect. lxxiii); a suspicion, the unreasonableness of which was greatly aggravated by the credible report of what he had done in the neighbourhood, and by the knowledge they had of his early piety and exemplary behaviour.

[n] *The heaven was shut up for three years and six months.*] This is again asserted by the apostle James, (chap. v. 17,) either as grounded on *our Lord's authority* here, or as a circumstance established by *tradition*; for in both places it is spoken of as a thing well known: nor can we doubt but the account is very exact, though the particular time is not determined in the Old Testament, nor is it certainly deducible from it.—Lightfoot and others have observed that there is somewhat here remarkable in this circumstance of *time*, as it agrees with the continuance of *Christ's public ministry*; that as *Elijah shut up heaven* by his prayers, so that *it rained not on the earth for the space of three years and six months*, so from the baptism to the *death of Christ, the heavens were opened* for the like space of time and *his doctrine dropped as the rain, and his speech distilled as the dew*. (Deut. xxxii. 2.) See Lightfoot's Harmony, and Grotius, in loc.

SECT. XXXI. Luke IV. 27.

city] of the Gentiles, in the country *of Sidon*. (1 Kings xvii. 9.) *And there were* also *many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; yet none of them was* miraculously *cleansed, but* that singular favour was bestowed on *Naaman the Syrian*,[o] a Gentile, and one of a hostile nation. (2 Kings v. 14.) Presume not therefore on your being my countrymen and neighbours, so as on that account to reject my message, lest you provoke God to send those blessings to strangers, and even to Gentiles, of which such infidelity and ingratitude would render you unworthy.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed saving Naaman the Syrian.

28 Nothing could be more disagreeable to them than such an intimation, *and all that were in the synagogue, when they heard these things,* 29 *were filled with* the most outrageous *fury: And rising up* at once, in a tumultuous manner, without any reverence to the place or day, or any sense of justice or common humanity, *they* violently *cast him* out of the synagogue, and *out of the city* too; *and brought him to the very brow of the mountain on which their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong,* 30 and dash him to pieces. *But* Jesus, when he had permitted their madness to go thus far, confounded their sight in such a miraculous manner, that *he passed through the midst of them* unknown,[p] *and went away* to the neighbouring city of Capernaum, where he abode for some time.

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill (whereon their city was built), that they might cast him down headlong.

30 But he passing through the midst of them, went his way.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 16 WE see that it was the *custom* of our blessed *Saviour* to frequent the *synagogues* every *sabbath-day:* how well therefore does it become his servants to be constant in their attendance on public ordinances; especially since those of the *gospel* are in many respects so much nobler than any which the *Mosaic* institution would admit!

17 In the *synagogues* the *scriptures* were constantly *read*; and it is matter of pleasing reflection, that in all ages of the *Chris-*

[o] *None of them was cleansed but Naaman the Syrian.*] Of the force of the particle εἰ μὴ here, and in some other remarkable places, see the note on John xvii. 12. Vol. II. p. clxxix.

[p] *Passed through the midst of them, unknown.*] Whether the *miracle* lay in rendering himself entirely *invisible*, or in putting on some *other form*, or in affecting their eyes or minds in such a manner that they should not *know him*, we cannot certainly determine: but it seems evident that there was something *miraculous* in the case. Compare John viii. 59; Luke xxiv. 16; and 2 Kings vi. 18—20.

tian church the *reading them* hath usually been made a part of the service in most of its solemn assemblies. Let it still be so with us, for this reason, among others, that so glorious a testimony to the genuineness of *scripture* may not be impaired in our hands, but transmitted to those that shall arise after us. SECT. XXXII.

And surely the *Old Testament*, as well as the *New*, deserves our attentive perusal; in which, if we are not strangely negligent, or strangely prejudiced, we must often meet with remarkable *prophecies of Christ* shining with a pleasing lustre, like *lights in a dark place.* (2 Pet. i. 19.) How amiable a view of him is given in that which he now opened? Let us seriously attend to it. It is a moving representation that is here made of the deplorable *state* in which the *gospel* finds us! The helpless *prisoners* of Divine justice, the wretched *captives of Satan*, stripped and *wounded*, the eyes of our understanding *blinded*, and the powers of our souls *enfeebled*, and, as it were, *bruised* with those chains which prejudice and vice have fastened upon them! But in these miserable circumstances, *Jesus* appears to *open the doors of our prison*, to *strike off our fetters*, and even *to restore our sight.* He comes to *enrich* our impoverished souls, and to *preach* a far better *jubilee* than *Moses* could proclaim; the free forgiveness of all our sins, and the recovery of an inheritance of eternal glory. Surely it should be to us a most *acceptable time. Blessed are the people that know this joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance!* (Psal. lxxxix. 15.) Verse 18, 19

In some sense, *this* instructive and comfortable *scripture is this day fulfilled in our ears* likewise. Let us also *bear our testimony* to the *gracious words* of this welcome messenger whom *God hath anointed* for such happy purposes! 21, 22

One would have imagined that while the *eyes* of his auditors were *fixed upon him*, their *souls* should have drank in this doctrine as *the thirsty earth* sucks up *the rain*, and that every heart should have been open to embrace him. But, O blessed *Jesus*, while thou art preaching these *glad tidings of great joy*, what a return dost thou find! Thou art ungratefully rejected, thou art impiously assaulted; and had their rage and malice been able to prevail, *the joyful sound* would have died into empty air as soon as it began, and this thy *first sermon at Nazareth* had been thy *last.* 20, 28, 29

Thus disdainfully art thou still *rejected* by multitudes who still hear the same message echoing from thy word. And is there not a malignity in the hearts of sinners which might lead those of our own days to the outrageous wickedness of these *Nazarenes*, were their opportunities the same, rather than they would bow their stubborn hearts to the *obedience of faith?* But while they are *crucifying thee afresh* by their sins, and *putting thee to open shame*, may we honour thee as the *Son of God*, the

Saviour of men; and labour by the ardour of our love, and the steadiness of our obedience, in some measure to balance the ingratitude of those, who, while they are opposing thee, are destroying themselves!

SECT. XXXIII.

Christ goes to Capernaum, and teaches in the synagogue there with great acceptance; and calls Peter and Andrew, and James and John, to a more stated attendance upon him. Mat. IV. 13—22. Luke IV. 31, 32. Mark I. 16—20.

MAT. IV. 13.

SECT. XXXIII. Mat. IV. 13.

AND Jesus *leaving Nazareth,* from whence *he* was expelled and driven out in the ungrateful manner that was before described, *came and dwelt* for a while *at Capernaum,* which was *a* considerable *city of Galilee, that lay on the sea-coast,* even on the northern shore of the lake of Gennesareth, *in the confines of Zebulon and Naphtali;* and from thence he made several small excursions to visit the neighbouring places.

14 And this was ordered by a special Divine Providence, *that what was said by the prophet Isaiah* (chap. ix. 1, 2.) *might be fulfilled,*[a]

15 When speaking of *the land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea,* and the country *about* those parts of *Jordan,*[b] which is called by the general name of *Galilee of the Gentiles,*[c] (because so many Gentiles were early settled there, and had filled it with a variety of superstitions,) he says, "That though God had "once made these nations vile, yet he would "hereafter render them glorious;[d] since even "there, by the settlement and preaching of

MAT. IV. 13. AND leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum [a city of Galilee,] which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: [LUKE IV. 31.]

14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:

[a] *That what was said by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled.*] The common translation is word for word correspondent to the original; but the sense, as it stands here, is so entirely the same, that I was unwilling to spoil the structure of the paraphrase by crowding in the word *saying;* nor do I think such an exactness necessary in order to render a version perfectly faithful.

[b] *About* those parts of *Jordan.*] That περαν sometimes has this signification, will appear by comparing Josh. xii. 1, 7; and Numb. xxxii. 19. Septuag.

[c] *Galilee of the Gentiles.*] The learned Drusius has given a large account of the reason of this name, and concludes it was the upper Galilee in the land of Naphtali, whereas the lower lay in Zebulon, and Capernaum was situated on the confines of both. Grotius traces the name up to Gen. xiv. 1. but most commentators refer it to 1 Kings ix. 11—13, supposing that Solomon's giving a tract of land here to Hiram occasioned it to be filled with foreigners, and to be peopled with a mixture of Phœnicians, Egyptians, and Arabians; according to the account that Strabo gives, Geograph. lib. xvi. p. 523.

[d] Though God had made them vile, yet he would hereafter render them glo-

SECT. XXXIII.

16 The people which sat in darkness, saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

" the Messiah among them, *The people that sat in darkness saw* (that is, should surely see) *a great* and glorious *light*, to disperse " that ignorance and vice which before clouded " them; *and* even *to them that sat* miserable " and helpless *in the* dark *region and* gloomy " *shadow of death* itself in the most melancholy " and the most dangerous condition, *light has* " remarkably *sprung up*[e] to cheer their hearts, " and guide them into the ways of peace and " happiness."

Mat. IV. 16.

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And *from that time* of his departure into Galilee,[f] *Jesus began to preach* in all the places that he came to in a more public manner, *and to say*, *Repent*, and turn unto the Lord, *for* he is now fulfilling his ancient promises; and *the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*[g] *And* this was the doctrine which *he was teaching them* during the time of his abode at Capernaum, and this he made the subject of his preaching in their synagogue *on the sabbath days*; not being discouraged by the ill usage that he met with at Nazareth upon his preaching of the same doctrine there. *And they were* powerfully *struck*,[h] and very much affected *with his doctrine*; *for his word was* attended *with* an air of *authority*

17

Luke IV. 31. And [he] taught them on the sabbath-days.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine; for his word was with power.

32

rious.] I follow Mr. Mede's just and beautiful version and interpretation of Isa. ix. 1. See Mede's Works, p. 101, 102; and Jeffery's Review, p. 125, 126; where that interpretation is both vindicated and improved: and I see no reason to doubt that it is *originally* meant of the *illumination* and *honour* these afflicted countries should receive by the presence and preaching of Christ.

[e] *Light has sprung up.*] The *heathen* writers represented the arrival of some great public benefactor in a place as *a new light* sprung up in the midst of darkness; see Elsner, Observ. Vol. I. p. 19.

[f] *From that time* of his departure into Galilee.] It is but just before that Matthew speaks of *Christ's departure into Galilee* (ver. 12,) and it is much more probable that he refers in general to *this*, than to the time of his *leaving Nazareth* (which he has mentioned in ver. 13,) as it is evident from Luke iv. 14, 15, and John iv. 43—45, that *Christ began to preach* in the synagogues of Galilee before he went to Nazareth. And thus I might have introduced *this text* as parallel to Mark i. 15. but that I would avoid as much as possible breaking the thread of the narration; comparing notes [b] and [c] in § xxxi. p. 179, 180.—The attentive reader will easily perceive that I suppose our Lord made only *one tour* about Galilee in the four or five last months preceding his *second passover* of which Matthew gives a general account below, Mat. iv. 23—25. § xxxvi. Nor can I see that Sir Isaac Newton had any just reason to conclude it *a second circuit* quite distinct from the former. It is true indeed that our Lord is said, Mat. iv. 13, after *leaving Nazareth* to have *come and dwelt at Capernaum*: but if that should be allowed to imply his making this the place of his more stated residence so as to call it *his home*, it is evidently intimated that he *did not stay long* in it at first; and shortly after it is spoken of only *as one of the cities* in which he was *sent to preach*; Mark i. 38. Nor can I find that, after he began to preach, he ever *continued long* in any one place.

[g] *The kingdom of heaven is at hand.*] See note [b] on Mat. iii. 2, p. 99.

[h] Powerfully *struck.*] See Luke ii. 47, 48, note [e], p. 94.

SECT. XXXIII.

and majesty, which incomparably exceeded that low and servile manner of preaching which the Scribes and Pharisees commonly used in retailing their precarious traditions and insipid comments to the people.

Luke IV. 32.

Mark I. 16.

And it was about this time that, *as Jesus was walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brethren*, that have been already mentioned,[i] *Simon*, who was also *called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for* by
17 their occupation *they were fishers. And* after some circumstances, an account of which will presently be given (sect. xxxiv), *Jesus said to them, Come after me, and* from henceforth attend me constantly in the course of my ministry, and *I will make you to become fishers of men*, and give you such abundant success in your ministry, that the number of souls converted by you shall be greater than that of the fish you have been
18 used to catch. *And they*, being struck with a very wonderful miracle,[k] the particulars of

MARK I. 16. Now as [Jesus] walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw [two brethren,] Simon [called Peter] and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: (for they were fishers:) [MAT. IV. 18.]

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. [MAT. IV. 17.]

18 And straight-

[i] *Two brethren, that have been already mentioned.*] John gives us an account (chap. i. 40—42, § xxi) that Andrew and Simon had before been *called* to the knowledge of Christ upon the banks of Jordan, and that the *name of Peter* had been then given to Simon: and it is probable that, from their first acquaintance with him, they *followed Jesus* for some time, and went with him to Cana and Capernaum, (John ii. 2. 12, § xxiii. xxiv.) and afterwards to Jerusalem (John ii. 13, 17, § xxiv.) and tarried with him while he continued in Judea. (John iii. 22, § xxvii.) But when the Pharisees grew jealous of the number of his followers, and Herod was offended at the popularity of John, we may suppose, that Jesus at his return to Galilee might think it prudent to dismiss *his disciples* for a time, till he himself had gone about from place to place to preach the gospel, and had informed the people more particularly of the character of his person and the nature of his doctrine: or possibly they might *leave him* at the time when the Samaritans prevailed upon him to go with them to their city. (John iv. 40, § xxx.) for after this we read no more of *his disciples* being *with him* till he now found them at the *sea of Galilee*. For they no sooner were gone home but they returned again to their old employment, and continued in it till they were now taken off from any further regard to their worldly business, and were particularly *called* by Christ to a constant and stated attendance upon him; see Lightfoot's Harmony on Luke v. 3.

[k] *Being struck with a very wonderful miracle.*] The account of *this miracle* (which is recorded by Luke, chap. v. 1—11.) I shall consider in the next section, and shall there give my reasons in note [s], for supposing it happened at this time, and was not, as Mr. Whiston would have it, the occasion of another call to *these disciples*. But I would here observe, that besides him, some who agree with me in this particular, yet out of regard to the supposed *regularity* of St. Luke's narration, place *this call of the four disciples* after the *ejection of the devil*, and the *cure of Peter's mother-in-law* at Capernaum, and Christ's travels through Galilee, which are recorded, Mat. viii. 14, 15; iv. 23—25; and Mark i. 21—39. (§ xxxv. xxxvi.) See Cradock, Le Clerc, Wells, Clarke, and L'Enfant, in their Harmonies. But they seem to have forgot that St. Mark expressly asserts (chap. i. 21.) that after the calling of these four disciples *they went into Capernaum, and straightway on the* ensuing *sabbath he entered into the synagogue*, and there *cast out the devil*, &c. and then (ver. 29.) *forthwith when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John*, and *Simon's mother was*

way they forsook their nets, and followed him. [MAT. IV. 20.]

19 And when he had gone a little farther thence, he saw [other two brethren,] James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship [with Zebedee their father] mending their nets. [MAT. IV. 21.]

20 And straightway he called them; and they [immediately] left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him. [MAT IV. 21, 22.]

which will presently be related, *immediately forsook their nets*, though the fishing trade was all they had to depend upon in life, *and followed him.* SECT. XXXIII. Mark I. 19.

And going a little way from thence he saw two other brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; and they were in a ship by the sea side, *with Zebedee their father*, employed in *mending their nets*, which had been broken by the vast draught of fishes they had taken just before. *And he immediately* applied to them as he had done before to Peter and Andrew, and *called them* to follow him: *and they* no sooner had received his orders, but *presently* they *left their father Zebedee with the hired servants in the ship, and*, in consequence of the secret energy which attended that call, they joined with Peter and Andrew, and with the greatest cheerfulness and readiness *went after him*, being determined to continue with him as his stated attendants: and they were all afterwards honoured with extraordinary favours from their Master; especially John, who was his bosom friend, and came to be called, by way of eminence, The disciple whom Jesus loved. 20

IMPROVEMENT.

SUCH was the zeal and courage of our Blessed *Redeemer*, that he no sooner had been persecuted and assaulted at *Nazareth*, but he went and preached in the synagogue at *Capernaum*. Thus may all the opposition that we meet with in the course of our duty, animate, rather than overbear, our resolution in performing it! Luke iv. 31.

How happy was *the land of Zebulon and Naphtali* in the visits of such a guest! And may we not add too, how happy is *our own land*, in being visited by the *everlasting gospel*, which is now much more clearly discovered to us than it was to *these coasts* while *Christ* began to open his ministry among their inhabitants. Mat. iv. 15.

In us is this *prophecy* of *Isaiah* eminently *fulfilled*: We but a few ages ago *sat in darkness*; and behold we *see a great light*, 16

cured.—Now it seems one of the most important *rules* for settling the *harmony* of the *evangelists*, that where any one of them has expressly asserted that he follows the *order of time*, we should, in regard to him, *transpose* others who do not assert equal exactness in that particular; (see Jones's Vindication of Matthew, p. 111, 112.) This is the case here; and therefore I have here *transposed* not only Luke, but also Matthew, who uses *notes of time* much more frequently, and seems to me in the main more exact in the *series* of his story than Luke.

SECT. XXXIII. Our country, amidst all the advantages of its soil and situation, was, in a spiritual sense, *the region and the shadow of death*; but the *Sun of Righteousness is risen upon us*, nor do we only behold his rising beams, but his meridian lustre. May we not be so ungrateful as obstinately to shut our eyes against it, lest *the valley of vision*, and *Emanuel's Land*, should on the whole prove to us the *land of destruction*, and *the valley of death* itself!

Luke iv. 32. That this may never be our case, let us diligently attend to this *Divine Teacher*, who speaks with such *authority*, and whose *words* are so weighty and *powerful*. May we feel the energy and authority of them! May they call us off from every undue attachment to the business or the pleasures of life! And

Mark i. 17. if he should ever see fit to try us, as he did these his servants, with a command to *forsake* our nearest *relations*, and our *earthly all*, for his service, let us do it with pleasure; remembering on the one hand, that *he who loves father or mother, wife or children, houses or lands, more than Christ, is not worthy of him*; and on the other hand, that he who abandons these engagements, *for his sake, shall receive an hundred fold, now in this time, and in the world to come life everlasting.* (Mat. x. 37, and Mark x. 29, 30.)

SECT. XXXIV.

St. Luke gives a more particular account of a miraculous draught of fishes, by which Peter and his three partners were prevailed upon statedly to follow Christ. Luke V. 1—11.

LUKE V. 1.

SECT. XXXIV. Luke V. 1. THE calling of those four celebrated apostles, Peter and Andrew, and James and John, was briefly related above; but, considering the important part which most of them bear in the following history, we shall here give a more particular account of it.[a] *Now it came to pass,*

LUKE V. 1. AND it came to pass, that as the

[a] We shall here give a more particular account of it.] Mr. Whiston (in his Harmony, p. 251 and 254.) supposes, with some others, that this is a distinct story from that of *the calling of these disciples* which we have in the preceding *section*, and that they were *then* called only to an *occasional*, but *now* to a *stated*, attendance on Christ. But I could not acquiesce in this, for the following reasons: (1.) There are many leading circumstances *the same* in the narrations of both; as for instance, that *Peter, Andrew, James* and *John, left their ships, their nets*, and *their father*; or, as Luke expresses it, *left all*, to follow Christ, on his promise that he would make them *fishers of men*. (2.) There is no circumstance of the story we have now before us which may not be reconciled with the other; as the attentive reader will perceive by my *paraphrase*, especially on ver. 11; where (as in many other cases) I have chosen in a few words to suggest the solution of seeming inconsistencies, rather than to state the difficulties and answers at large. (3.) If this interpretation be not allowed, then neither Matthew nor Mark have given us any account of Christ's calling these four illustrious persons and intimate

people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesareth,

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake; but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land; and he sat down and taught the people out of the ship.

4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the

that while Jesus continued to reside at Capernaum, *when the multitude pressed upon him* with eagerness *to hear the word of God*; *as he stood by the lake of Gennesareth*,[b] on the banks of which he had been walking, (Mark i. 16. sect. xxxiii.) *He saw two* little *vessels standing by* the side of *the lake*, *but* with no person in them; for *the fishermen*, after the labour of a very unsuccessful night, *were gone out of them*, *and were washing their nets* in the sea as they stood on the shore. *And entering into one of the vessels*, *which belonged to Simon* Peter, with whom, as well as with his brother Andrew,[c] we have already seen that he had formed some acquaintance on the banks of Jordan,[d] while John was baptizing there, (John i. 37—42. sect. xxi.) *he desired him that he would put out a little way from land*, that he might thus avoid the crowd, and at the same time be more conveniently heard; *and* at a proper distance *he sat down*, *and taught the multitude out of the vessel.*

SECT. XXXIV. Luke V. 1.

2 3

And when he had made an end of speaking to the people, *he said to Simon*, *Put out* yet far-

4

friends of Matthew to a *stated* attendance on him. And (4.) There seems no reason to believe that these *four disciples* forsook Christ again within a *few days*, or even a *few hours*, after that *call* which Matthew and Mark have recorded. Yet this Mr. Whiston must suppose; for it is plain Christ left Capernaum and proceeded on his progress the very *next day after those cures* which so directly followed *that call* of these disciples which is related by those two evangelists; see *note*[k] on Mark i. 18, p. 192; and compare Mark i. 35—39; and Luke iv. 42—44, sect. xxxvi.

[b] *The lake of Gennesareth.*] This is the same with what is elsewhere called *the sea of Galilee*, (Mark i. 16.) and *the sea of Tiberias*, (John vi. 1.) being distinguished by these names, as it was situated on the borders of Galilee, and the city of Tiberias lay on the western shore of it. And for its other name Gennesareth, as Herod had a palace near Tiberias, there were delightful gardens on the banks of it, which possibly might be the reason of this name, which some would have to be derived from GENEI SARUM, *the gardens of princes*; though others rather think it to be only a corruption of the word *Cinnereth*, or *Cinneroth*, which is the *name* by which *the sea* was called in the Old Testament, (Numb. xxxiv. 11; and Josh. xii. 3)—It was a large collection of waters, through which the river Jordan passed, and was continually supplying it with a fresh quantity of water. Josephus tells us it was an hundred and forty furlongs long, and forty broad; (Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 10. (al. 18,) § 7. p. 257. Havercamp.) And it was usual with the Jews to call such places seas where there was such a large extent of water; see Lightfoot's Harmony, and Drusius in loc.

[c] His brother Andrew.] The name of Andrew is omitted by St. Luke in the relation that he gives us of this story; but it is plain from the account of it that we have just now had from Matthew and Mark in the foregoing section, that Andrew was then present with Simon, and that they both were called at the same time.

[d] He had formed some acquaintance on the banks of Jordan.] See note [l] on Mat. iv. 18, p. 192.

SECT. XXXIV. Luke V. 5.

ther *into the deep* water, *and* then *let down your nets* into the lake *for a draught* of fishes. *And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have been labouring all night and have caught nothing; nevertheless I will let down the net,* and make another trial *at thy word,* both in 6 obedience to it, and in dependence on it. *And* accordingly *when they had done it, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes; so that their net brake* in several places as they were drawing 7 them up. *And they beckoned to their partners* James and John, *who were* at some distance from them *in the other vessel, to come and assist them; and they came and filled both the vessels, so that they were* overloaden, and drew so much water that they seemed *ready to sink.*

8 *Now Simon Peter seeing* [*this*] *fell down before the knees of Jesus* in amazement, *and,* covered with confusion, *said,* Lord, what am I, that thou shouldest come into my vessel to me? let me entreat thee now to *go out from me; for I am* such *a sinful man, O Lord,*[e] that I am utterly unworthy to receive and entertain thee, nor dare I to continue in the presence of so 9 great and holy a prophet. *For* this amazing proof that Jesus had now given of his power was such, that *astonishment seized him and all that were with him, on account of the* vast *draught* 10 *of fishes which they had taken: And in like manner also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners* in the trade *with Simon,* were struck with wonder and amazement at the sight of this surprising miracle. *And Jesus said to Simon, Do not fear;* for, instead of doing thee any harm, I *from this time,* design to employ thee in much nobler work, in which I will give thee such happy success that *thou shalt captivate men,*[f] in greater abundance than those fishes which thou now hast caught.

deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done they enclosed a great multitude of fishes; and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10 And so *was* also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

[e] *Go out from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.*] Peter could not but conclude there was some peculiar presence of God with a person who could perform such a miracle; and a consciousness of sin made him afraid to appear in the presence of such an one, lest some infirmity or offence should expose him to some more than ordinary punishment. (Compare Jud. vi. 22; xiii. 22; and 1 Kings xvii. 18.—It is also well known that the ancients thought it improper and unsafe (where it could be avoided) for good men to be in the same ship with persons of an infamous character; nor would the heathens sometimes permit the very images of their deities to be carried in the vessel with such, or even with those concerning whom there was any strong suspicion. See Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 202, 203.

[f] *Thou shalt captivate men.*] This is

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all and followed him.

And when they had brought their vessels to land, they, (that is, first Peter and Andrew, and presently after them James and John, who were mending their broken nets with Zebedee their father,) upon Christ's repeating the call, *left* their vessels and nets, with the fish they had taken, even *all* they had in the world, *and followed him*; being now determined to attend statedly upon his ministry, that they might thus be fitted for the great work in which he intended to employ them.

SECT. XXXIV. Luke V. 11.

IMPROVEMENT.

How wonderful a choice does *Jesus* make of those who were to be the chief ministers in his kingdom! Surely the same Divine power which prevailed on these honest *fishermen* to *leave* their little *all* to *follow him*, could with equal ease have subdued the hearts of the greatest and wisest of the nation, and have engaged them to have attended him in all his progress through the country, with the exactest observance and the humblest reverence: but he chose rather to preserve the humble form in which he at first appeared, that thus he might answer the schemes of Providence, and by *the weak things of the world, confound them that are mighty*. (1 Cor. i. 27.) Verse 11

Yet we may observe that he does not go to *call* them that stood *all the day idle*; but, on the contrary, confers this honour upon honest industry; on them that had been *toiling all the night* in the proper duties of their station and profession in life. Let us pursue our business with vigilance and resolution; assuring ourselves, that, however mean it be, *Christ* will graciously accept us in it; and let us fix our dependence on his blessing, as absolutely necessary to our success. 4, 5

These pious *fishermen let down their nets at Christ's word*, and it was not in vain. How vast was that power which brought such a *multitude of fishes* into it! but how much greater and more apparently divine was the energy which, by the ministration of one of these illiterate men, converted at once a much greater number of *souls*, and turned the despisers and murderers of *Christ* into his adorers! (see Acts ii. 41.) 6

Blessed *Jesus*, we would humbly bow ourselves before thee as the Lord of nature and of grace; and, instead of saying with *Peter, Depart from us, for we are sinful men*, we would rather say, "*Lord*, for that very reason, while we own our-

the exact English of ζωγρων, which is so translated, 2 Tim. ii. 26. To *catch* implies something more of *artifice* than the word carries in it, or the occasion seems to require.

SECT. XXXIV. Verse 8 selves most unworthy of thy presence, we most importunately entreat it: Come unto me, *O Lord, for I am a sinful man*, and if thou stand at a distance from me, I perish! Come, and recover my heart from the tyranny of sin; come, and possess and fix it for thyself!"

9, 10 That secret power which these good men felt on their souls while the word of *Christ* were sounding in their ears would be to them a *token for good* as to the success of their ministry upon others. Surely we cannot wish any thing of greater importance for the edification of the church, than that the persons who are employed in its public offices may themselves experimentally know the power of divine grace, and be brought to a determination to *follow Christ* whithersoever he goeth, before they undertake to invite and persuade others to do it.

SECT. XXXV.

Christ entering into Capernaum, teaches in the synagogue, and casts out a devil; and coming into Peter's house, cures his mother-in-law of a fever. Mark I. 21.—31. Mat. VIII. 14, 15. Luke IV. 33—39.

MARK I. 21.

SECT. XXXV. Mark I. 21. WHEN our Lord had thus called Peter and Andrew, *and* James and John, *they* all left the side of the lake, and *entered* with him *into* the city of *Capernaum; and immediately on the sabbath-day,*[a] *going*, according to his custom, *into the synagogue, he taught* [*them*] the important truths which he was in so extraordinary a manner commissioned to vindicate, or to reveal. *And they were* again *struck with amazement*[b] *at* the sublimity and excellency of *his doctrine, for he was* continually

MARK I. 21. AND they went into Capernaum, and straightway on the sabbath-day he entered into the synagogue and taught.

22 And they were astonished at his doctrine.

[a] *And immediately on the sabbath-day.*] It is in the *original* τοις σαββασιν, in the *plural number*; and it is frequently expressed in the same manner where it is plainly to be understood of a particular day, as Mat. xii. 1; xxviii. 1; Acts xiii. 14; and elsewhere. There is no doubt but it is spoken here of the *next sabbath*, and probably of the very *next day* after his coming back with his disciples to Capernaum; see note [k] on Mark i. 18, p. 192.

[b] *They were* again *struck with amazement.*] It has already been observed that they were thus amazed at his first coming to preach among them, (Luke iv. 32, § xxxiii.) and there seems also to have been something in the discourses, as well as in the miracles, of this last sabbath that he spent among them at this time, which raised their wonder, and affected them in a peculiar manner; as appears from the multitude of *sick people* which were brought to him that evening; see Mark i. 32, 33; Luke iv. 40; and Mat. viii. 16, in the *next section*.

trine; for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

teaching them in such a manner *as one who had* an immediate *authority* from God to dictate to them; *and not as the scribes*, their established teachers, who dealt in precarious traditions, and fanciful allegories; the amusement of light minds, but utterly unfit to alarm the conscience, and to captivate the heart.

SECT. XXXV.

Mark I. 22.

Luke IV. 33. And in [their] synagogue there was a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil; and cried out with a loud voice. [Mark 1. 23.]

And there was in their synagogue a man that had the spirit of an unclean demon,[c] or fallen angel, possessing him, by which he was miserably distorted and agitated; *and he*, either compelled to bear an unwilling testimony to Christ, or desirous by malicious praises to bring him into suspicion as a confederate with those infernal spirits, *cried out with a loud voice*, *Saying*, in the name of all the rest, *Let us alone; what hast thou to do with us, O Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us*, by driving us out of our abodes on earth to the regions of darkness? *I* well *know thee*, and, under all the disadvantages of thy present appearance, can sufficiently discern *who thou art;* and therefore dread thee as *the Holy one of God*, whom he hath sanctified and sent into the world for the destruction of my kingdom in it; but take notice that I do not begin the quarrel by offering thee any injury or affront.

Luke IV. 33.

34 Saying, let us alone; what have we to do with thee, *thou* Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art? the Holy One of God. [Mark 1. 24.]

34

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, [*and* torn him] he [cried with a loud voice, *and*] came out of him.

But Jesus, scorning praises from so impure a mouth, *rebuked him, saying, Be silent, and come out of him: and*, upon this, *the demon having thrown him* violently from his seat *into the midst* of the assembly, [*and*] *having* terribly *convulsed him*,[d] *cried with a loud voice* [*and*] *came out of him; but* was so restrained by the

35

[c] *The spirit of an unclean demon.*] It is well known that a late learned and ingenious writer hath revived the notion long since maintained by Mr. Joseph Mede and Dr. Bekker, that these supposed demoniacs were only lunatics or epileptics: but on the most impartial perusal of what has passed between him and his learned antagonists, I am fully convinced that there is no sufficient reason for departing from the received interpretation; and I should think this story alone a convincing proof on the side of it. It is most incredible that an evangelist should have been left to ascribe this man's disorder to the spirit of an unclean demon, if it were only lunacy or the falling sickness; or that a physician of common sense should speak of it as a memorable circumstance that such a distemper did not hurt a man by leaving him: see ver. 35.—I retain the word demon, as the epithet unclean seems to have little force when joined with devil, being necessary implied in it.

[d] *Having* terribly *convulsed him.*] This seems to be the proper meaning of the word σπαραξαν that is used by Mark here, which signifies to shake or move with violence: and to this purpose Grotius has observed that σπαραγμος is sometimes used to signify a convulsion. And it is much more natural to understand it thus, than to suppose the devil to have torn

SECT. XXXV.

divine power and mercy that he *did him no* farther *harm*;[e] and the man immediately recovered, and was perfectly well.

Luke IV. 35. Mark I. 27. *And they were all* exceedingly *amazed* at so miraculous a cure, *so that they inquired of each other and said, What an* extraordinary *event is this? [and] what a new* and unexampled *doctrine is this? for* behold he does not only distinguish himself by his incomparable manner of teaching, but *with* majestic *authority, and* efficacious *power he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they* instantly *obey him, and come out* of the possessed, shewing thereby that they

28 are subject to him. *And his fame* was so raised by this signal miracle, that it *went forth immediately through all the region of Galilee,* and made way for his reception in the progress he afterwards took *into every place of the neighbouring country.*

29 *And presently* after this miraculous cure, Jesus *going out of the synagogue* with his disciples, *they came, with James and John* in their company, *into the house of Simon and Andrew,* who being brothers, did then live together:

30 *And Simon's wife's mother* was dangerously ill, and *kept her bed,*[f] *of a violent fever; and* having seen the miracle which he had wrought but just before in the synagogue, *they presently tell him of her, and entreated him* that he would

31 be pleased to interpose *for her* recovery. *And coming* into the room where she lay, *and standing near her, he took her by the hand, and raised her up* in her bed; *and* with an air of majesty *rebuked the fever,*[g] *and immediately the fever left her* at once; *and she* was instantly restored to such a degree of strength that she *arose and waited upon them;* being so far from needing the assistance of others, as she had

and hurt him not. [Mark I. 25, 26.]

Mark I. 27. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for with authority [and power] commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him [and come out.] [Luke IV. 36.]

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee, [into every place of the country round about.] [Luke IV. 37.]

29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a [great] fever, and anon they tell him of her, [and besought him for her.] [Luke IV. 38.]

31 And he came [and stood over her,] and took her by the hand, and lifted her up, [and rebuked the fever; and immediately the fever left her, and she [arose, and] ministered unto them. Luke IV.

him, (according to the common translation) which leads the reader to imagine that he grievously *wounded him*, when Luke expressly says that he *hurt him not*.

[e] *Did him no* farther *harm.*] This is probably the sense of μηδεν βλαψαν αυτον; for while the convulsion continued, it must have given some pain, and might have been attended with lasting disorder, had not the restraining and healing power of Christ prevented.

[f] *Kept her bed.*] This seems the proper meaning of the word κατεκειτο.

[g] *Rebuked the fever.*] There could be no inconvenience in the evangelist's using this phrase, more than in saying he rebuked the winds and sea, (see Mat. viii. 26,) for it is hardly to be thought the Jews would imagine the fever a real person; but it was quite otherwise as to their notion of demons.

39—Mat. VIII. 14, 15.] done before, that she became capable of taking her part in the business of the family. SECT. XXXV.

IMPROVEMENT.

JUSTLY may we join our *astonishment* with that of the inhabitants of *Capernaum*, and say, What manner of teaching is this? and with what regard should it be received, when the *devils* themselves, and the most desperate *diseases*, are thus apparently subject to him who uses it? Mark I. 27.

We see the malice of *Satan* in *possessing* and tormenting the *bodies* of men. God then permitted it, to render *Christ*'s triumph over him so much the more illustrious, and the appearance of that great *Deliverer* so much the more welcome.[h] Such diabolical operations as these are now restrained; and it is matter of great thankfulness that they are. But would to God that malignant enemy did not, in a yet more fatal manner, *possess the souls* of men, and *work in the children of disobedience!* Yet *there* can the power of *Jesus* prevail, to *bind the strong man and spoil his goods.* Luke IV. 33.

Wisely did *Christ silence* the suspicious *praises* of *an unclean spirit;* and vain is all the hope which men build merely on those *orthodox professions* of the most important truths, in which *Satan* himself could vie with them. 34, 35

Christ returning from the *synagogue*, finds the *mother-in-law of Peter* detained from the solemn assemblies, a prisoner at Mark I. 29

[h] The appearance of that great *Deliverer* so much the more welcome.] It would be very foolish to imagine that God suffered these unhappy persons to be *possessed* merely that Christ might have the honour of *curing* them: but it is to be considered that the view under which Christ is most frequently represented is as the great *antagonist* to the *prince of darkness*, and the *gospel* has its foundation in the *victory* which Satan has gained over mankind; compare Gen. iii. 15; Mat. xii. 28, 29; 1 John iii. 8; Heb. ii. 14; and Rom. xvi. 20; (as also Mat. vi. 13; John xvii. 15; Eph. vi. 16; and 1 John ii. 13, 14; iii. 12; v. 18, 19; in all which places ὁ πονηρὸς seems to signify the *wicked one*, that is, *the devil*, whose powerful influence over men is intimated or expressed in each of them:) and it appears from *Wisd.* ii. 24, that the Jews before Christ's time had something of this notion, and considered the wicked in general as taking part with the *devil*: the words are, *Through envy of the devil came death into the world, and they that do hold of his side do find it.* The inspired *texts* above shew that the expression is just; and it was certainly on this account a most wise and gracious dispensation to permit the *devil* about this time to give some unusual proofs of his existence, power, and malice, in thus attacking *men's bodies;* which would naturally convince them what a dangerous enemy he was to their *souls*, and what need they had of the patronage of Christ; as the sensible *victory of Christ* in these *dispossessions* would be a proof and specimen of that illustrious and complete triumph over him and his confederate powers in which *Our Lord's mediatorial kingdom*, is to end. No kind of *miracles* therefore could be more fit to attest his *mission*, and to promote his *interest* among men; and hence it is that hardly any are more frequently and circumstantially described.—This seems a sufficient answer to the difficulty proposed by Mr. Mede (see his Works, p. 28,) and a clear proof that we shall do no service to *Christianity* by endeavouring to disapprove the reality of these *possessions*, or by dropping the mention of the *infernal powers* in our preaching, how fashionable soever such omissions may grow.

SECT. XXXV. home under an afflictive providence, which that circumstance of *confinement* probably rendered yet more afflictive to her. But the mercy which the evening brought with it was a rich equivalent for all the sorrows of the day. *Jesus*, their welcome guest, appears as the great *Physician* both of soul and body; a touch of his *hand* assuages the tumult in her veins, and at his *voice* the distemper leaves her. Surely, as the great *Lord* in the kingdom of Providence, he performs those *cures* which are now wrought by natural means, and is to be owned in them. Must not each of us thankfully acknowledge how often he hath *rebuked fevers* and other distempers by the skill of physicians, and the efficacy of medicines; so that they have departed from us perhaps when we esteemed them desperate, and had received *the sentence of death in ourselves.*

Mark I. 30. 31. Luke IV. 39.

Let us learn to imitate the pious *gratitude* of this *good woman;* who, when recovered, *immediately arose and ministered unto Christ.* Thus let it be our care that those lives which are spared by his goodness, and that strength which is renewed by his power, may be faithfully and affectionately devoted to his service.

Luke IV. 39.

SECT XXXVI.

Christ having performed several cures on the evening of the Sabbath-day, retires early the next morning to his devotions; and declining a longer abode at Capernaum, takes a circuit about Galilee, preaching and working miracles. Mark I. 32, 39. Luke IV. 40, *to the end.* Mat. VIII. 16, 17. *and* IV. 23, *to the end.*

MARK I. 32.

SECT. XXXVI. THE remainder of the day Jesus spent in Peter's house; *and in the evening, when the sun was set*, and consequently the sabbath was ended,[a] *they brought unto him*, on their beds and couches, which they scrupled before to carry,[b] *all that were ill, and many that were possessed with devils:* Yea, *all that had any* persons in their houses *sick of various distempers, brought them unto him* for relief: *and he* sent none of them away with a denial, but with a

Mark I. 32. Luke IV. 40.

MARK I. 32. AND at even, when the sun did set they brought unto him all that were diseased and [many] that were possessed with devils. [MAT. VIII. 16.—LUKE IV. 40.]

LUKE IV. 40. All they that had any sick with divers dis-

[a] *When* the sabbath was ended.] It is well known that the Jews reckoned their *day* from evening to evening, and that the *sabbath* begun and ended at *sun-set*. See Lev. xxiii. 32.

[b] Which they scrupled before to carry.] We have a memorable instance of this *scruple* in John v. 10—16; § xlvi.

cases, brought them unto him: and he [cast out the spirits with his word, and laid] his hands on every one of them, and healed [all that were sick.] [MAT. VIII. 16.—MARK 1. 34.—]

MAT. VIII. 17. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

MARK I. 33. And all the city was gathered together at the door.

LUKE IV. 41. And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ the Son of God. And he rebuking them, suffered them not to speak;

sovereign authority *cast out the* [*evil*] *spirits with a word; and* treating those that were disSECT. XXXVI.
eased in the most gracious and compassionate manner he *laid his hands on every one of them, and healed all that were sick*, without the use of any means, how inveterate and desperate soever their distemper was: *That* thus *it might* appear to *be accomplished* in some measure *which was spoken* of him in a more noble and important sense *by the prophet Isaiah*,[c] *saying*, (chap. liii. 4.) "*He himself* graciously *took our* "*infirmities* upon him, *and* with incredible "labour, self-denial, and compassion, *bore* "[*away*] the burden of *our diseases*,[d] and happily delivered us from those miseries which "our corruption and depravity had introduced." *And* this occasioned such a concourse of people, that in a manner *the whole city* of Capernaum *was gathered together at the door* of the house in which Jesus was; some coming as humble petitioners for themselves or their friends, and others as curious spectators of the surprising miracles he wrought.

Luke IV. 40.

Mat. VIII. 17.

Mark I. 33.

And there were *devils also* that *came out of many, crying out* with great violence (as that before had done which had been cast out by him in the synagogue), *and saying*, as that other did, We know thee who *thou art, the* promised *Messiah*, and *the Son of God. But he severely chid them, and did not suffer them to speak* these things so frequently and largely as

Luke IV. 41.

[c] *In a more noble and important sense by the prophet Isaiah.*] It seems evident that Isaiah, in the place here referred to, speaks of the *sufferings* which Christ endured for us: for on account of these only could he be *esteemed* (as it is added in the end of the verse) *stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.* So that the evangelist has only introduced it as an allusion to those words, as being capable of the sense here given in themselves; though we are certainly to understand them in a more exalted sense when we consider them in their connection. Or if they should be understood by any as if it had been said, "Though he miraculously "cured our diseases, yet he was thus "ungratefully censured;" it must be then allowed on this less natural interpretation, that Peter uses them allusively when he applies them to the *crucifixion of Christ*, as he evidently does, 1 Pet. ii. 24. Such instances are frequent in the sacred writers; and they are elegancies and beauties rather than imperfections. Had it been argued from this text that the Messiah must have *healed the sick*, there had been then indeed some room for an objection.

[d] *Bore away* the burden of *our diseases.*] Grotius has well observed the emphasis of the word ἐβάστασεν, which signifies to *carry a heavy load* (Rom. xv. 1; Gal. vi. 2), and so does well express the indefatigable *labours of Christ*, spending the evening in *healing the sick*, probably with many intermingled discourses, after he had employed the day in *preaching*. I have endeavoured to suggest this idea in the paraphrase.

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they would otherwise have done; *for they* well *knew that he was the Messiah*: but as wise reasons made him in his own discourses, often to decline the opportunities he had of expressly avowing that title and character, so they engaged him in a much stronger manner to be more particularly cautious with respect to evil spirits, of receiving it from them.[e]

for they knew that he was Christ. [MARK I. 34.]

Luke IV. 41.

Mark I. 35.

Thus was it that the day was spent in preaching and the evening in working miracles: *and* after all this labour and fatigue, Jesus allowed himself but a very short repose; for *in the morning he rose before it was light*,[f] *and as the day was coming on he went out* of the house where he had lodged, to avoid the concourse of the people, or any interruption from the family, *and* privately *departed to a desert place* in the neighbourhood; *and there prayed* to his heavenly Father in secret, pouring out his soul in the most copious and affectionate manner.

MARK I. 35. And in the morning, rising up a great while before day [when it was day] he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. —[LUKE IV. 42.]

36 *And* when the day was something advanced, and crowds of people came to inquire after him, *Simon* Peter, *and they that were with him*, (who have been already mentioned as his partners and companions,) guessing where Jesus

36 And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him.

37 was, went out and *followed after him*. *And when they had found him* at his private devotions, *they said unto him*, Master, the providence of God calls thee now to more public

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All *men* seek for thee.

[e] *Cautious of receiving it from them.*] It is probable that if it was not by mere constraint that these evil spirits made this confession, it was (as was hinted before on Luke iv. 33, p. 199.) with an artful design to bring our Lord into suspicion as acting in confederacy with them, and the perverse Pharisees might perhaps lay hold of this occasion of fixing on Christ that impious and senseless calumny, that *he did not cast out devils but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils*, Mat. xii. 24.

[f] *In the morning—before it was light: πρωι ἐννυχον λιαν.*] This does sufficiently express the sense of the original: for ἐννυχον λιαν does properly signify *when the night was very far advanced*, or *when it was yet deep night*; and either of these interpretations, in this connection, implies that the *dawning of the day* was near at hand. And thus it may be easily reconciled with Luke; for γενομενης ἡμερας, which the common translation renders, *when it was day*, might as well have been rendered *as the day was coming on*: for γενομενης may be understood (as Grotius has observed,) not only as expressive of the time that is *already come*, but as implying what is *near at hand*, or what is forming now, and ready to approach; (compare John xiii. 2. and the note there, sect. clxix.)—Some have indeed maintained that different facts are referred to in the texts of Mark and Luke before us; the former referring to Christ's *rising*, the latter to *his going out*: but it seems that Mark connects *his going out* so immediately with *his rising*, that no stress can be laid on such a distinction.

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service; for *all the people* of the city *are* assembled yonder, and are *seeking after thee?*[s]

Luke IV. 42. And the people sought him and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

And what they said was immediately confirmed; for *the multitudes sought after him* with so much diligence, that they traced the steps of Peter and his companions, *and* while they were speaking *came* even *to* the place in which they had found *him; and* they *would* fain *have detained him* a while, and pleaded in a very importunate manner *that he should not depart from them.* But they could not prevail: *and he said to them* that were his constant attendants, *Let us go* directly *into the neighbouring towns, that I may preach there also,* without returning back to Capernaum at present; *for,* though we have many friends and well-wishers there, *I must* by all means *preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, as for that purpose I am sent* into the world by my Father, with the most extensive designs of usefulness, [*and*] *therefore I came forth* from his more immediate presence.

Luke IV. 42.

Mark I. 38. And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also; for [I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also; for therefore am I sent] therefore came I forth. [Luke IV. 43.]

Mark I. 38.

Mat. IV. 23. And Jesus went about all Galilee [and cast out devils] teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. [Mark I. 39; Luke IV. 44.]

Mat. IV. 23.

And thus *Jesus took a circuit* with his disciples *through all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues,* where-ever he had an opportunity, *and preaching the good news of the kingdom* which God was about to erect; *and* he confirmed and illustrated what he said,[u] by *casting out devils, and healing every disease, and every malady of the people* among whom he came.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto him all sick people, that

24

And his fame went through all the neighbouring country of *Syria; and they brought to him* from thence, as well as from nearer places, *all,* that is, great numbers of *sick people*[v] *that*

[s] *All the people are seeking after thee*] It is very likely that Peter, and they that were with him, warm as they were with the expectations of a temporal kingdom, might think this a very favourable opportunity of increasing Christ's popularity, on which those hopes were built.

[u] Confirmed and illustrated what he said.] It is justly and beautifully observed by the author of a late Discourse on the Miracles of Christ, that they were not only a proof, but a specimen of the power he claimed as the Messiah. Thus his *giving sight to the blind,* illustrated his power of enlightening the prejudiced minds of men; his *healing their bodies,* shewed how able he was to heal their souls, and was a specimen of his authority to forgive sin, as it was in part an actual removal of its punishment; his *casting out devils* was an emblem of his final victory over Satan; and his *raising* particular persons *from the dead* was a convincing display of his power to accomplish a general resurrection.

[v] *All,* that is, great numbers of *sick people.*] It would be endless to enumerate the texts where common sense requires us to take the word *all* in this general manner; see Mark i. 37; Luke iii. 21; John iv. 29; xiv. 26; 1 Cor. ix. 22; and Phil. ii. 21.

SECT. XXXVI. Mat. IV. 24.

were seized with a variety of distempers and most *tormenting* and incurable *pains, even demoniacs, and lunatics, and paralytics;*[k] *and he healed them,* not excepting those whose cases were the most deplorable and helpless. *And* these miraculous cures, together with his excellent manner of preaching, rendered him so popular, that *great multitudes* of people *followed him from* all the towns of *Galilee, and* from the region of *Decapolis,*[l] *and* even from *Jerusalem, and* the rest of *Judea*[m] *and* all [*the country*] *about Jordan,*[n] both on its eastern and western banks.

were taken with divers diseases and torments; and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judea, and *from* beyond Jordan.

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Mark I. 32, 33.

How delightful were the *sabbaths of Christ* spent in the midst of all his fatigues? How pleasantly did *the sun go down* upon him, when he had been imitating that heavenly luminary in his steady and constant course; scattering a brighter light and more beneficial influences upon all about him!

35 And when the *sabbath* had been spent in these labours of piety and love, how happily were the fruits of it carried into the ensuing *week?* The first *morning* of it, that it might be most pleasantly and most profitably begun, *Jesus rose before it was light,* that he might enjoy God and himself in religious retirement. It surely becomes us sometimes willingly to deny ourselves the gratifications of sleep, that we may have the better opportunity for devotion. And it should be the peculiar care of those who are employed in God's public service, to cul-

[k] *Even demoniacs, and lunatics,* and *paralytics.*] Possession, madness, and the palsy, are justly reckoned as cases of great misery and little hope; the evangelist therefore properly instanced in these. It is an evident proof that these were thought distinct cases, for the different readings are so ill supported as not to deserve a particular mention.

[l] *From Decapolis.*] This is well known to have been a tract of land on the east side of the sea of Galilee, in which ten cities were situated near each other, and formed into a distinct district. It formerly belonged to the half tribe of Manasseh.

[m] *From Jerusalem, and Judea.*] Hence Sir Isaac Newton concludes that Christ had been at Jerusalem at his second passover; and that these people had attended him from thence: (see Newton on Prophecy, p. 151.) The circuit described above might indeed have been the employment of four months, and probably took up most of that time; but Matthew might have used this expression, if persons who came from Jerusalem followed Christ here, though he himself had never been there at all. On the whole, however ingenious and probable the hypothesis of this learned author is, it is liable to so many objections, that on the maturest deliberation, I durst not venture to build upon it the structure of an *harmony,* entirely different from that of all other commentators except Osiander, which (if I mistake not) in most places agrees with his maxims. I rather chuse to add an appendix, representing the order in which the sections are to be read according to him; which will, to the more curious part of my readers, be sufficient, and will excuse me from the necessity of swelling these notes in such a manner as I must otherwise have done.

[n] *About Jordan.*] See note [b] at Mat. iv. 15. p. 190.

tivate communion with him in private; lest, while they *keep the vineyard* of others, their own be *neglected* and impoverished. (*Can.* i. 6) SECT. XXXVI.

Our Lord's retirement is interrupted by *the people* who came to *inquire after him*, and desired to have *detained him* longer among them: and who that has ever known the pleasure of conversing with him, would not desire that it might be longer continued and frequently renewed? But in this instance, *their request* must be *denied;* the great purposes of his *ministry* required his presence elsewhere, and he breaks through all that importunity which would have broken in upon his schemes of usefulness: a resolution which we must learn in some cases to imitate if we would prosecute the business of life with vigour and success. Let us often reflect *wherefore we were sent;* and judge by that where God would have us to be; that by the intimations of his pleasure every motion may be regulated, and every abode determined. Luke IV. 42. Mark I. 38. Luke IV. 43.

Wherever *Christ* removes, he still *goes about doing good*, publishnig the gospel, and confirming it by the most amazing works of power and of mercy. How well were these *miracles* suited to awaken mens attention, and to convince their consciences of his divine mission! Well might *his fame* go over the *whole country:* may it extend itself now to the remotest regions, that *all the ends of the earth* may *look unto him and be saved*, (*Isa.* xlv. 22.) while he displays a *healing power* over their *spirits* proportionable to that which he here exerted on their *bodies!* Mat. IV. 23, 25.

SECT. XXXVII.

Christ begins his sermon on the mount, with the beautitudes and general exhortations to exemplary piety. Mat. V. 1—16.

MAT. V. 1.

AND seeing the multitudes, he went up into a moun-

MAT. V. 1.

AND [*Jesus*,] in his circuit through Galilee, *seeing the* vast *multitudes* which flocked around him from all parts, thought it proper to inform them more largely than he had hitherto done concerning the nature of his doctrine and the design of his appearance; that he might correct those false notions of the Messiah's kingdom[a] which so generally prevailed, and SECT. XXXVII. Mat. V. 1.

[a] That he might correct those false notions of the Messiah's kingdom.] In order to enter into the beauty of this discourse it is necessary to consider it as addressed not merely to the apostles (who were not yet chosen under that character,) but to his disciples in general, and to vast numbers of people who, affected with the sight or fame of his miracles, were now assembled around him; probably expecting that he would immediately declare himself the Messiah, and full of those false notions of his kingdom which so generally prevailed.

SECT. XXXVII. Mat. V. 1.

which would prove so pernicious to those who were governed by them. He therefore *went up to a mountain*,[b] that he might be the better heard by the crowds which surrounded him; *and when*, according to the custom of the Jewish rabbies in their sermons, *he was set down* to teach them, they that were already *his disciples*, and others that were disposed to receive
2 information, *came near to him*. *And opening his mouth*,[c] with an air of great solemnity to intimate the importance of what he was going to deliver, *he taught them* the most suitable and excellent lessons. And as happiness was the great end to which the wisest philosophers undertook to conduct their hearers, our Lord began his discourse with several weighty, though uncommon remarks, as to the surest method of obtaining it: *saying*,
3 You naturally congratulate the rich and the great: and expect, under the reign of the Messiah, to be advanced to wealth, and dignity, and power: but *happy*[d] *are the poor in spirit*,[e] those

tain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying.

3 Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for

Mr. Blair, in his excellent discourses on this chapter, has shewn (I think beyond all others) how directly the beginning of this sermon is levelled against these *prejudices*. He has also observed (as it is very necessary to do) what a beautiful *correspondence* there is between the *characters* described in these *beatitudes*, and the *blessings* connected with them.

[b] *Went up to a mountain.*] It does not appear in what part of Galilee this mountain was situated; and (if the cure of the leper, which Christ performed at his descending from it, was wrought in the confines of some other city, and not of Capernaum) there is no reason to suppose, as most expositors do, that it was in the neighbourhood of Capernaum; (see Mat. viii. 1, 2: and note [b] on Luke v. 12; § xliv. Mr. Maundrel says, that what is now called The Mount of the Beatitudes, is a little to the north of mount Tabor (Trav. p. 115;) and if this be its true situation it must be at some considerable distance from Capernaum.—I shall elsewhere give some hints of the reasons which have led me to conclude that this discourse was different from, and previous to that which Luke has given us in the sixth chapter of his gospel, ver. 20; & *seq.* though many of the sentiments and expressions are the same; (See note [a] on Luke vi. 20. § liii.)

[c] *Opening his mouth.*] I do not take the expression of *opening his mouth*, to be always a *pleonasm*; the manner in which it is used elsewhere may sufficiently prove the contrary; compare Judg xi. 35, 36; Job. iii. 1; xxxiii. 2; and Acts viii. 35; x. 34. And thus the ancient Greek and Roman writers used it, as Elsner proves, Observ. Vol. I. p. 20, 21.

[d] *Happy.*] I have here used the word *happy* rather than *blessed*, as more exactly answering to μακαριοι, as the other does to ευλογημενοι; and I the rather chose to render it thus because our Lord seems to intimate by it, not only that the dispositions here recommended would be the way to future blessedness, but that they would immediately be attended with the truest happiness, and the most noble pleasures.

[e] *The poor in spirit.*] Though I cannot think with Mr. Joseph Mede, (p. 25.) that this chiefly refers to a disposition to *part with their possessions* for charitable purposes; or confine it, with Grotius and Baxter, to a disposition to bear poverty with resolution, submission, and cheerfulness: yet I doubt not but the latter of these is comprehended in the

theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

humble souls that, deeply conscious of their ignorance and guilt, can quietly resign to divine teachings and divine disposals, and accommodate themselves to the lowest circumstances which Providence shall appoint them; *for* however they may be despised and trampled on by men, *theirs is the kingdom of heaven;* they will be most likely to embrace the gospel, and they alone will be entitled to its most important blessings, for time and eternity.

SECT. XXXVII. Mat. V. 3.

4 Blessed *are* they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

You admire the gay and jovial part of mankind, and please yourselves with the hopes of joy and festivity: but I say unto you, *Happy are* the men of a more serious temper, and especially *they that* now *mourn* under a penitent sense of their sins;[f] *for they shall* ere long *be comforted* with the discoveries of God's forgiving love, and be cheered with the reviving rays of his everlasting favour. 4

5 Blessed *are* the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.

You imagine, that military courage and martial exploits are to introduce the kingdom now to be erected, and to raise men to distinguished stations in it: but I rather say, *Happy are the* men, who are *meek* and gentle under injuries and provocations, and are cautious in offering, but patient in bearing them; *for they* shall weather many a storm, which would bear down the rugged and obstinate, and at length (as the Psalmist expresses it, Psal. xxxvii. 11.) "*shall* "*inherit the earth*, and delight themselves in "the abundance of peace," which can only have its seat in such gentle bosoms. 5

6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness,

Happy are they that, instead of desiring insatiably the possessions of others, and endeavouring to obtain them by violence or deceit, eagerly *hunger and thirst after righteousness*,[g] 6

humility, which is here expressed by *poverty of spirit*; which is a temper, that indeed is absolutely necessary, in order to our being cordially reconciled to the gospel method of salvation.

[f] *They that mourn* under a penitent sense of their sins.] It seems proper to restrain it within these limits, since there is *a sorrow of the world* which ends in *death*, 2 Cor. vii. 10; and though *mourning* for the calamities of life be often allowable and commendable, yet it is so natural an affection, and sometimes in its degree so sinful, that one can hardly suppose our Lord here pronounced *a blessing* upon it in such general terms.

[g] *That hunger and thirst after righteousness.*] The very pious and judicious writer I mentioned above, in note [a], has taken a great deal of pains to prove, that these words are chiefly designed to recommend *a love of justice* towards our fellow-creatures; and is for rendering χορτασθησονται, *they shall be fed to the full*, while those who are violent and rapacious as young lions, may *lack and suffer*

SECT. XXXVII. Mat. V. 6.

and make it the delightful business of life to improve in all the branches of virtue and goodness; *for they shall* never be disappointed in these pious pursuits, but *be* abundantly *satisfied* with the righteousness they seek, (compare Prov. xxi. 21.) and be competently supplied with every necessary inferior good. (See Mat. vi. 33.)

ness; for they shall be filled.

7 Far from training you up to delight in scenes of desolation and slaughter, I rather declare, *Happy are the merciful* and compassionate, that feel the sorrows of others as their own, and with tender sympathy hasten to relieve them; *for they shall obtain* that *mercy* from God, which the best and happiest of mankind need, and on which they continually and entirely depend.

7 Blessed *are* the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Indulge not a thought of those licentious gratifications, which are often mingled with victory, and are accounted as the pleasures of the great: *happy are the* men that not only abstain from these gross enormities, but are concerned that they may be *pure in heart* too,[h] avoiding every irregular desire and mortifying every unruly passion: this resolute self-denial shall be the source of nobler and more lasting pleasure; *for they shall see God:*[i] and thus purified and refined, shall enjoy him in his ordinances now, and dwell with him for ever in heaven.

8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart; for they shall see God.

hunger; Psal. xxxiv. 10. But the *phrase of hungering and thirsting after righteousness*, must surely be expressive of much more, than merely a steady care to treat all mankind equitably, and to avoid what would be injurious and oppressive; and we may rather understand it, as a just and beautiful description of a holy ardour of soul, in pursuit of the most eminent attainments in *universal goodness*, which will end in complete *satisfaction*, as the necessary consequence of perfect holiness in a future state.—These different views of the *future blessedness* sufficiently vindicate our Lord from the charge of tautology, though we should suppose (as, after all that Mr. Blair has said to the contrary, I think we must,) that our Lord leads the minds of his disciples upwards, in almost each of these *beatitudes*.

[h] *Happy are the pure in heart.*] Mr. Blair supposes, this may refer to the expectation they had of possessing themselves of *beautiful captives*, in those wars by which they fancied that the *Messiah's kingdom* would be raised and established. The large seraglios of eastern princes and great men, which by a very mistaken taste, were regarded as matters of state and grandeur, gave too much countenance to such a wild and extravagant notion; but as the hint is at most but obliquely intimated, I thought it convenient to touch upon it only in a very transient and general manner.

[i] *For they shall see God.*] Elsner has illustrated this text by shewing, that the Pagans thought a good man might *see their deities* in some circumstances, when to the wicked they were invisible. (Elsn. Observ. Vol. I. p. 22, 23.) But this, in their theology, might be intended to subserve some fraudulent views, from which the nature of Christianity is most abhorrent. The remark, however, may in some degree shew how natural the thought is, in the words before us.

SECT. XXXVII.

Mat. V. 9.

9 Blessed *are* the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God.

I come not, as you may fondly suppose, to lead you forward to the field of battle or to teach you to propagate religion by the sword; but, on the contrary, I declare unto you, *Happy are the peace makers*, who not only avoid contention, but labour to extinguish it wherever it prevails; *for* though mistaken men may ascribe such a gentle disposition to cowardice and meanness of spirit, *they shall* have the honour to *be called the children of* the *God* of peace,[k] and be owned by him in that dear relation, as they resemble him in the benevolence of their characters.

10 Blessed are they which *are* persecuted for righteousness sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Instead of these pomps and pleasures, these victories and triumphs, (in expectation of which you may now be crowding around me), my followers must prepare themselves for the severity of suffering: but *happy are they that are persecuted for the sake of righteousness*, and courageously endure the greatest extremities, for the testimony of their consciences: their richest treasure is beyond the reach of their most inveterate enemies; *for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*, and they shall reign with God in everlasting glory. 10

11 Blessed are ye, when *men* shall revile you and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the

And on these principles, *happy are ye*, my sincere disciples and faithful friends, *when men shall* injuriously *reproach you and persecute you, and shall falsely say every thing that is evil* and scandalous *of you for my sake*, and because of your professed relation to me. Be not discouraged under all this load of infamy and oppression; but rather *rejoice, and triumphantly exult*;[l] *because your reward in heaven* [*will be*] proportionably *great* and distinguished: *for* this has in all ages been the portion and the proof of the most eminent saints; and you particularly know from the sacred records, that it was *thus they persecuted the prophets* of their own nation,[m] 11 12

[k] *The children of* the *God* of peace.] So God is often called, Rom. xvi. 20; 2 Cor. xiii. 11; Phil. iv. 9; and Heb. xiii. 20. (Compare Eccles. iv. 10.) *To be called God's children*, signifies to be really so, and to have a right to that name conferred upon us by a Divine adoption; see 1 John iii. 1; and John i. 12.

[l] *Triumphantly exult.*] Of the emphatical signification of the word αγαλλιασθε, see note [f] on Luke i. 14. p. 36.

[m] *Thus they persecuted the prophets* of their own nation.] This is abundantly evident, from the known histories of Moses, Samuel, David, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, &c. See 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15, 16; Mat. xxiii. 29—35; Acts vii. 51, 52; and Heb. xi. 36, 37.

SECT. XXXVII.

who were long *before you* the ambassadors from God to them; and as you now share in the tribulation of those holy men, you shall ere long share in their glory.

prophets which were before you.

Mat. V. 12.

13 Let it be, in the mean time, your care to imitate their piety and zeal, as remembering that *you*, my disciples, *are* to be as it were *the salt of the earth*, the means of preventing or curing the growth of that corruption which prevails in it, and of seasoning mens minds with wisdom and grace: *but* it would be most unhappy for yourselves, as well as for them, if you should be destitute of those blessed principles; for *if the salt be grown insipid*,[n] *with what can it* possibly *be seasoned? It is no farther of any avail*, or significancy at all; *but*, as an useless thing, is left *to be thrown out of doors, and to be trampled on by men*, as the common dirt of the streets: thus worthless and contemptible will you, my disciples, be, even in the most eminent stations, if you lose your character for zeal and vital religion.

13 Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

14 And therefore, that this may not be the case with you, consider the distinguished circumstances in which you are placed: *you are*, like the sun, to be *the light of the world*; and how conspicuous and bright should you appear under that character! Even *a city that*, like yonder town, *is situated on a mountain*,[o] *cannot be hid*, but will attract mens eyes from a consider-

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

15 able distance. *Neither do men light* so much

15 Neither do

[n] *If the salt be grown insipid.*] Mr. Le Clerc sinks the meaning of this noble passage very low, when he supposes our Lord only intends to compare *his disciples* to *salt-ashes* used in manuring the ground, (see Luke xiv. 34, 35.) That passage in which Livy calls Greece *Sal Gentium*, the salt of all the nations, on account of those intellectual improvements they learned from thence, might easily have suggested a much nobler sense, which the paraphrase expresses. The word μωρανθῇ has a peculiar beauty and strength here, and might literally be rendered, *if it be infatuated*, or *grown foolish*, alluding to the common figure, in which sense and spirit are expressed by *salt*; but I thought the metaphor too strong to be literally retained in the version, and therefore contented myself with a distant imitation, as we call a flat lifeless discourse *insipid*. Compare Job vi. 6. and Col. iv. 6.

[o] *A city that*, like yonder town, *is situated on a mountain.*] Mr. Maundrel tells us that there is a city called Saphet, supposed to be the ancient Bethulia, which, standing on a high hill, might easily be seen from the *mountain* on which Christ made this discourse; and probably supposes he might point to that here, as afterwards he did to the *birds* and the *lilies*: Mat. vi. 26—28. (Maundrel's Travels, p. 115.) Many writers have justly observed, that our Lord, like Socrates, take his similies from the most obvious things, familiarly known to his hearers, and often before their eyes, even while he was speaking; a thought most largely illustrated by Sir Isaac Newton on the Prophecies, p. 148, 149.

men light a candle, and put it under a bushel; but on a candlestick, and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

as a common *lamp, and put it under a bushel,* and conceal it there; *but* they rather set it *on a stand, and it giveth light to all that are in the house.* How much less will it become you, whom I have compared to the sun,[p] to hide, or to suppress your rays? SECT. XXXVII. Mat. V. 15.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

16 On the contrary, *let* it be your care, that *your light* may *so shine before men, that they may* continually *see your good works* in every circumstance and relation of life, *and* may thereby be engaged to *glorify your Father who is in heaven;* not only praising him for sending such a religion into the world, but also themselves embracing your faith and imitating your holy example.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 1, 2 WHAT abundant reason have we to bless God, that this large and edifying discourse of our blessed Redeemer, is thus particularly recorded by the sacred historian. Let every one *that hath ears to hear,* attend to it; for surely *never man spake as our Lord* here *doth* Let us fix our souls in a posture of humble attention, that we may *receive the law from his mouth.*

3–12 He opened it with *blessings,* repeated and most important *blessings.* But on whom are they pronounced? and whom are we taught to think the *happiest* of mankind? The *meek* and the *humble,* the *penitent* and the *merciful,* the *peaceful* and the *pure,* those that *hunger and thirst after righteousness,* those that labour but faint not, under *persecution!* Blessed *Jesus!* how different are thy maxims from those of the children of this world! They call the proud *happy,* and admire the gay, the rich, the powerful, and the victorious. But let a vain world take its gaudy trifles, and dress up the foolish creatures that pursue them. May our souls share in that *happiness* which the *Son of God* came to recommend and to procure! May we *obtain mercy* of the Lord; may we be owned as *his children;* may we *see his face;* and may we *inherit his kingdom!* With these enjoyments, and these hopes, we will cheerfully welcome the lowest or the most painful circumstances.

Let us awaken and stir up our souls to the cultivation of those amiable *virtues,* which are here recommended to our pursuit; this *humility* and *meekness,* this *penitent sense* of sin, this ardent *desire after righteousness,* this *compassion* and *purity,* this *peacefulness* and *fortitude of soul,* and, in a word, this *universal good-*

[p] How much less will it become you, whom I have compared to the sun, &c.] That this is the sense and spirit of this beautiful passage, Mr. Pierce has well shewn in his fourth dissertation.

SECT. XXXVII.

ness which becomes us as we sustain the character of *the salt of the earth*, and *the light of the world.*

Is there not reason to lament it, that we answer the character

Verse 13, 14 no more? Is there not reason to cry out, with a good man in former times,* "Blessed *Jesus!* either these are not thy words, "or we are not *Christians!*" Oh, season our hearts more effectually with thy *grace!* Pour forth that divine *oil* on our lamps! Then shall the flame brighten; then shall the ancient honours of

16 thy religion be revived; and multitudes be awakened and animated by the lustre of it, *to glorify our Father in heaven.* Amen.

* *Linacer.*

SECT. XXXVIII.

Our Lord declares his purpose of establishing and vindicating the moral law, and enters on his divine exposition of it. Mat. V. 17—26.

MAT. V. 17.

SECT. XXXVIII.

Mat. V. 17.

THAT the great design of our Lord's appearance might be more fully understood by the multitudes that were now assembled around him, he proceeded in his discourse, and said, *Suppose not that I am come to dissolve* that goodly fabric of holy precepts contained in the sacred writings of *the law, or the prophets;* for I solemnly assure you, That *I am not come to dissolve, but* rather *to* vindicate and illustrate, to *complete* and adorn [*them,*[a]] both by my example and discourses, as well as to answer the highest ends of the ceremonial institutions.

18 *For verily I say unto you,* That as their original is divine, their honours shall be perpetual; so that, *till heaven and earth pass away,* and the

MAT. V. 17.

THINK not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till hea-

[a] To vindicate and illustrate, to *complete* and adorn *them.*] I was willing to take the word πληρωσαι in its most extensive sense, as comprehending what Christ has done to answer the end of the *ceremonial law*, as well as to vindicate and enforce the *moral*: yet by the connection it seems, that the *latter* was chiefly intended; and this phrase, *the law and the prophets*, is used in this sense Mat. xxii. 40. It is strange, that any should have questioned, whether the precepts of Moses required such *spirituality* of obedience as Christ here demands. That great command, of *loving the Lord God with all the heart*, &c. and *our neighbour as ourself*, (Mat. xxii. 37.) must surely comprehend all this. I shall only add, that Vitringa's interpretation of πληρω, who supposes it here to answer to the Chaldee GEMAR, which signifies to paraphrase, illustrate, open, or explain, seems to me worthy of consideration. (Compare Rom. xv. 19; πεπληρωκεναι το ευαγγελιον, *I have fully explained the gospel*; and Col. iv. 12; πεπεπληρωμενοι εν παντι θελημαλι του Θεου, *completely instructed in the will of God.*) See Vitring. Observ. Sacr. lib. I. dissert. iii. cap. 5. §. 7.

SECT. XXXVIII

Mat. V. 18.

even and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do, and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

whole visible frame of nature be disjointed, *not one jot or one tittle shall pass* or perish *from the law*,[b] *till all things* which it requires or foretells, *shall be effected*.[c] *Whoever therefore shall* himself transgress or *violate one of the least of these commandments* which are contained therein; *and* especially, whoever *shall teach* other *men so* to do, whether by his licentious principles or irregular example, *he shall be accounted* [*one of*] *the least* and unworthiest members *in the kingdom of heaven*, or in the church of the Messiah; and shall soon be entirely cut off from it, as unfit for so holy a society; *but whosoever shall do* them, *and teach* [*them*] with that advantage which nothing but the authority of a good example can give, *he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven*, and be treated with distinguished honour and favour, in proportion to his zeal in so good a cause. Let this therefore be the care of all that hear me this day: *for I say unto you*, with all the solemnity that so important an affair requires, *That unless your righteousness abound* far *more than* [*that*] which is apparent in the lives, or even required in the precepts, *of the scribes and Pharisees*,[d] as highly as they are generally esteemed, *ye shall* be so far from making any illustrious figure, that ye shall *not by any means enter into the kingdom of heaven*,[e] or be owned by the Son of man as truly his subjects.

19 20

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the *righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

[b] *One jot or one tittle.*] The word ιωτα, which we render *jot*, undoubtedly answers to the Hebrew letter *jod*, whence the English word here used seems to be derived, and which being the least letter of their alphabet, might properly be used proverbially on this occasion.—Κεραια, which we render *tittle*, properly signifies one of those little ornamental curvatures, or flourishes, which, when Hebrew is elegantly written, are generally used at the beginning and end of a letter, and sometimes at the corners too.—I think it might well have been rendered, *not the least letter or stroke*, &c. and so much the rather, as *jot* and *tittle* in English, signify much the same.

[c] *Till all things* which it requires or foretells shall *be effected*: εως αν παντα γενηται.] The translation here given, is most literal and comprehensive. The law has its effect, when its sanctions are executed, as well as when its precepts are obeyed.

[d] Apparent in the lives, or even required in the precepts *of the scribes and Pharisees.*] As our Lord levels his following discourse, not so much against the corrupt lives of these Jewish teachers, as against their doctrines, I conclude, that the text chiefly refers to the *latter*: yet since their lives were yet worse than their maxims, it must comprehend the *former*. They seem, (so far as we can judge by this sermon, and other scriptures) to have taught—that the *precepts of the law* extended only to the outward actions—that a zeal in the *ceremonial* parts of religion would excuse *moral* defects and irregularities—and that some important *privileges* were inseparably connected with a descent from Abraham, &c.

[e] *Ye shall not by any means enter into the kingdom of heaven.*] This must great-

SECT. XXXVIII. Mat. V. 21.

To illustrate this, I will now proceed to explain some of those precepts of the law, which these Pharisaical teachers have, by their perverse glosses, enervated and dishonoured; and I will begin with the sixth commandment. *You have heard that it was said to the ancients*,[f] and particularly to your fathers at mount Sinai, *Thou shalt not kill*:[g] *and* you have been taught, that the only design of it was to restrain men from actual murder; and accordingly it has been added, That *whosoever shall* unlawfully *kill* another, *shall be obnoxious to the judgment*,[h] and be capitally punished in the common courts of judicature. *But I say unto you, That* it was the design of God in this precept, to prohibit extravagant passions and abusive language, as well as the most fatal effects of them in destroying the lives of each other: so that *whosoever shall, without* just *cause*,[i] *be angry with his brother*, so as secretly to wish him evil, *shall be obnoxious to the judgment*, or shall be liable to a worse punishment from God, than any that your common courts of judicature can inflict:[k] *and whosoever* to his secret anger shall add opprobious and contemptuous words; or, for instance, *shall say to his brother, Raca*, that is,

21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment.

22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall

ly surprise Christ's hearers, if the proverb, which has since prevailed, were of so ancient a date; for it has been commonly said by the Jews, that "if but "*two men* were to enter into the king-"dom of heaven, one of them would be "a Pharisee, and the other a scribe."

[f] *You have heard that it was said to the ancients.*] Thus are the words ἐρρέθη τοῖς ἀρχαίοις, to be rendered; see Grotius and Whitby, in loc.

[g] *Thou shalt not kill.*] I might have rendered, Οὐ φονεύσεις, *Thou shalt not commit murder*, as Dr. Scott has very properly done; but I chose to retain the words of the commandments, as they are usually expressed among us, that it might at first hearing be more apparent to every reader, that what follows each is our Lord's commentary upon it.

[h] *Shall be obnoxious to the judgment.*] To understand this, and the following verse, it is necessary to observe, that the Jews had a common court of *twenty-three men*, wherein capital sentences might be passed, on which a malefactor might be strangled or beheaded; this was called the judgment; but the sanhedrim, or council, was the supreme Jewish court, consisting of *seventy-two*, in which the highest crimes were tried, which they, and they alone, punished with stoning, which was thought a more terrible death than the former. See Grotius's excellent note on this text, of which the best commentaries upon it since him, are little more than transcripts. (See Bishop Hopkins's Works, p. 65, 66.]—As murder was undoubtedly a capital crime, Dr. Lightfoot, and after him Dr. Whitby, must be mistaken in supposing that *judgment* here signifies *punishment from the* immediate *hand of God*, as in a case which *human laws* would not reach. See Ligh. f. Hor. Hebr. and Whitby, on Mat. v. 22.

[i] *Without* just *cause.*] Though εἰκῆ, *without cause*, be wanting in some old versions and manuscripts, the sense plainly implies it. See Dr. Whitby in loc.

[k] To a worse punishment from God, &c.] That *judgment* must here signify *punishment from God*, is plain, because this *causeless anger* might be so concealed in the heart, as not to admit of conviction before men.

SECT. XXXVIII

Mat. V. 22.

be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire.

Thou worthless empty fellow,[l] *shall be* exposed to yet more terrible effects of the divine resentment and be *obnoxious to* a yet severer punishment, that will as far exceed the former as that inflicted by *the sanhedrim*, which extends to stoning, does that which follows on the judgment of the inferior courts, which only have the power of the sword, *but whosoever*, in his unreasonable passion, *shall* presume to *say* unto his brother, *Thou fool*, that is, Thou graceless wicked villain,[m] thereby impeaching his moral character, as well as reflecting on his intellectual, *shall be obnoxious to the fire of hell*, or to a future punishment more dreadful even than that of being burnt alive in the valley of Hinnom,[n] from whence you borrow the name of those infernal regions.

23 Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to

23 Remember *therefore* to lay aside all your animosities, and to live in peace and love, as ever you would escape God's wrath, and secure his favour. Without this, your most expensive sacrifices would be so vain, that I must inculcate it on every one of you, as a most necessary caution, *If thou art bringing thy gift*, however

[l] *Raca*, that is, thou worthless empty fellow.] Drusius gives the most learned and accurate account of the etymology and import of this word, which seems pretty exactly to answer to coxcoma in our language.

[m] *Thou fool*, that is, thou graceless wicked villain.] Mr. Blair thinks that μωρε, *thou fool*, answers to RAKEHELL; but that being only applied to a debauchee, seems too contracted. Wicked men are so often called fools in the Old Testament, especially in the writings of David and Solomon, that the appellation in the Jewish language, signifies not so much a weak thoughtless creature, as a man deliberately guilty of some heinous crime, or, in one word, a VILLAIN. On this account, I cannot but think it wrong that ανοητε, Luke xxiv. 25. or αφρον, 1 Cor. xv. 36. should, by so harsh a translation as ours, have been confounded with such an infamous word as this.

[n] Burnt alive in the valley of Hinnom.] Though it is so well known to the learned, I must beg leave to remind my English reader, that the *valley of Hinnom*, or *Tophet*, had been the scene of those detestable sacrifices, in which children were burnt alive to Molech, (compare 2 Kings xxiii. 10; 2 Chron. xxviii. 3; and Jer. xix. 2—5; xxxii. 35.) and was afterwards defiled by Josiah, 2 Kings xxiii. 10, and made a receptacle for the filth of the city, where fires were kept continually burning to consume it: and it is probable, that if any criminals were executed on the statute; Lev. xx. 14, or xxi. 9, this accursed and horrible place might be the spot of ground, on which they were consumed. However that were, it seemed, both with regard to its former and latter state, a fit emblem of hell itself, (see Isa. xxx. 33, and Jer. xix. 11—13,) which, in the Syriac language, takes its name from thence, and was commonly called *Gehenna* by the Jews; (See Lightf. Hor. Hebr. in loc. and Preface to his Har. of the New Test.)—It must here signify a degree of *future punishment*, as much more dreadful than that incurred in the former case, as *burning alive* was more terrible *than stoning*: for I apprehend the *punishment* of each degree of *anger* and fury here mentioned, is to be referred to the *invisible world*, or else our Lord's words would not be generally true.

SECT. XXXVIII

costly and free,[o] even *to the* very *altar, and there recollectest that thy brother has any* just cause of [*complaint*] *against thee*, do not con-
Mat. V. 23. tent thyself with a secret, and it may be a treacherous purpose, that thou wilt hereafter accommodate the affair, but bring it to an im-
24 mediate issue; And, *leaving thy gift there*, in the hand of those that are ministering *before the altar, go away, and first* make it thy care to *be reconciled to thy brother*, by an acknowledgment of thy fault, and by a readiness to make him any reasonable satisfaction; *and then come and offer thy gift*,[p] which thou mayest then cheerfully hope, God will accept at thine hands.
25 And it will be prudence, as well as humanity, to apply this advice to suits at law, if you are so unhappy as to be engaged in them: my counsel then to each of you is, That thou shouldest make it thine endeavour to *come to a friendly agreement with thine adversary*[q] *quickly, while thou art in the way* going *with him* to a magistrate; *lest the adversary* should *deliver thee to* be tried before *the judge; and the judge* deciding the cause against thee, *deliver thee to the officer* of the court, to keep thee in custody till payment be made; *and thou* not having enough by thee to discharge an account inflamed with so many additional articles of ex-
26 pence, shouldest *be cast into prison: Verily I say unto thee*, Thy antagonist, when he has got thee at such an advantage, will be more rigorous in his demands than before; and *thou shalt not by any means come out from thence, till*

the altar, and there remember'st that thy brother hath ought against thee;

24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother and then come and offer thy gift.

25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily, I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou

[o] *If thou art bringing thy gift*, however costly and free.] Δωρον, *a gift*, implies that it was a *free-will offering*; which adds great strength to the sentence, beyond what it would have had, if the word had been Θυσιαν, *sacrifice*.

[p] *First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*] It is observable, that Philo (de Sacrif. p. 844.) explaining the law of the trespass-offering, tells us, "That when a man had injured "his brother, and repenting of his fault, "voluntarily acknowledged it, (in which "case, both *restitution* and *sacrifice* were "required,) he was first to make *restitution*, and then to come into the temple "*presenting his sacrifice*, and asking par-"don." This is a very just and a natural account of the matter, and adds a great illustration to this text; especially when it is considered, that our Lord supposes in this case, not a *trespass-offering*, but *a voluntary gift* presented before the altar; and yet declares, that this will not be accepted, while there is a consciousness of having wronged a brother, and not made him reparation.

[q] *Come to a friendly agreement with thine adversary.*] The word αντιδικος properly signifies a person who is *going to law* with another. I have rendered ισθι ευνοων, *come to a friendly agreement*, because the original seems to imply, not only *peace*, but *benevolence*.

hast paid the uttermost farthing.

thou hast discharged the very last farthing of thy debt. And surely, if by impenitent wickedness, thou makest thyself the prisoner of the divine justice,[r] thy case will be yet more deplorable and hopeless.

SECT. XXXVIII. Mat. V. 26.

LET us seriously consider, and often recollect, the purposes of *Christ*'s appearance: *he came not to destroy the law and the prophets*, or to dissolve mens obligation to observe them: but rather to enforce, as well as to fulfil them. How fatally shall we pervert the purposes of his coming, if we regard him as the *minister of sin?* How ungratefully shall we abuse the merciful constitution of his *gospel*, should we take encouragement from thence to violate his *law?* Dangerous as well as ungrateful abuse, indeed! For God's eye will be watchful over its honours, and his hand exerted to maintain them; so that *heaven and earth shall pass away*, before it shall fail of its *accomplishment* in being either obeyed, or avenged on the impenitent sinner. May it be our constant care to *keep* it ourselves, and to *teach* others to observe it! May we *teach* it by our lives as well as our lips; and let our daily conversation demonstrate how practicable, and how amiable, its precepts are! So shall we be *great in the kingdom of heaven*, in the pursuit of which we may give full scope to the noblest ambition of which human nature is capable.

Verse 17, 18, 19

Let our hearts own, and feel, the *spiritual* sense of *God's law*, that we may rise to a more sincere, and more extensive *righteousness*, than that of the *scribes* and *Pharisees*. May we *delight in it after the inward man*, and learn to regulate our thoughts and our passions, as well as our external behaviour, by it!

20

Especially let us avoid all the malignant and ill-natured *passions*, all thoughts of rash and immoderate *anger*, all words of contumely and *reproach*. If we would maintain communion with the *God of love*, let love govern in our hearts; and when we come to present our devotions to him, let us *lift up holy hands without wrath*, as well as *without doubting*, (1 *Tim.* ii. 8.) so may we promise ourselves a gracious welcome; so shall we carry away the most valuable blessings!

21, 22, 23

But are none of us strangers to this blessed state? Are none of us obnoxious to the divine displeasure? If we are so, with

[r] If thou makest thyself the prisoner of the divine justice.] This thought is a natural reflection on what was said before; but it is rather intimated than expressed in our Lord's words, which so naturally lead to the sense given in the paraphrase, that to those who are unacquainted with the Popish manner of managing controversies, it might seem surprising they should ever be urged in favour of *purgatory*. The vanity and inconsistency of it is well exposed by Bishop Burnet on the Articles, p. 169, and Limborch, Theolog. lib. vi. cap. 10. § 22.

SECT. XXXVIII. Verse 25

what a holy solicitude of soul should we labour to make up the *controversy*, and *come to an agreement, while we are* yet *in the way* with this awful *adversary!* lest we be immediately hurried before the tribunal of the *righteous Judge of all the world*, and *be delivered* into the hands of justice, to be *reserved in everlasting chains*, beyond the possibility of redemption.

26 Lord, we were all the *debtors*, and, in one sense, the *prisoners* of thy justice; and of ourselves we are most incapable, not only of *paying the uttermost farthing*, but even of discharging the least part of the debt! We bless thee for that generous *surety*, who has undertaken and discharged it for us; and by the price of whose atoning blood we are *delivered* from the *chains of darkness*, and are *translated into the glorious liberty of thy children.*

SECT. XXXIX.

Our Lord proceeds in his exposition of the law, strictly prohibiting uncleanness, divorce, contention, and revenge; and urging the contrary virtues. Mat. V. 27, *to the end.*

MAT. V. 27.

SECT. XXXIX. Mat. V. 27.

JESUS proceeded in his sermon to the seventh commandment, and observed, *You have* often *heard that it was said to the ancients, Thou shalt not commit adultery;* and that law has been explained, as if it related only to the grossest

28 acts of uncleanness: *But I say unto you, That* it extends not only to unchaste actions and words, but even to looks, and the very thoughts of the heart; for *whosoever shall gaze on a woman*[a] *to lust after*, and thus cherish and indulge the secret workings of irregular desire in his mind, *has already committed* that *adultery with her in his heart*,[b] which this commandment was designed to forbid, and thereby rendered himself, in the sight of God, guilty of the breach of it.

MAT. V 27.
YE have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

[a] *Whosoever shall gaze on a woman: ὁ βλέπων γυναῖκα.*] There are several other places, where the word βλέπω signifies *to look* on an object *with great attention*, or to *fix the eye* upon it. See Mat. vii. 3; xviii. 10; Luke vii. 44; viii. 18; Acts i. 9; iii. 4; 1 Cor. iii. 10; x. 12; Phil. iii. 2; and Rev. xvii. 8.

[b] *Committed adultery with her in his heart.*] In the first edition I had rendered it *debauched her*, because it is plain ἐμοιχεύσεν must extend to single as well as married persons; but, on the animadversion of a learned friend, I am convinced that the spirit of our Lord's meaning is best expressed, by retaining the word used in the *seventh commandment*, and giving the passage such a turn as I have now given it in the paraphrase, which does not at all limit the sense. But to render γυναῖκα *a married woman*, would be a limitation, I think not to be justified.

SECT. XXXIX.

Mat. V. 29.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee, that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

You will think me severe, in requiring you so strictly to mortify all the irregular propensities of nature, but you will find it, on the whole, as much for your interest, as it is to part with a gangrened member, to prevent the death of the whole body; yea indeed, it is infinitely more so. *And if*, therefore, *thy right eye offend* or ensnare *thee*,[c] or any thing dear as thy right eye, would be the necessary occasion of leading thee into sin, *pluck it out* with inexorable resolution, *and cast it* far *from thee* with abhorrence: *for it is advantageous to thee, that one of thy members should perish, rather than thy whole body should be thrown into hell;* which yet must be the fatal consequence of indulging the most favourite lust.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

Yea, if thy right hand offend or ensnare *thee*,[d] though it be so useful and necessary a part, do not spare it, but immediately *cut it off, and cast it from thee;* for I renew the declaration, That *it is* highly *advantageous to thee, that* any *one of thy members should perish, rather than thy whole body should be thrown into hell;*[e] to be the companion of thy guilty soul there, in everlasting horror and misery.

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.

It has been said, (Deut. xxiv. 1.) *Whoever would dismiss his wife, let him give her a writing of divorce:* and this precept, which was indeed intended to prevent the frequency of such dismissions, by making it so solemn and irrevocable a thing, has perversely been interpreted, as a warrant for having recourse to it upon every trifling occasion.

32 But I say unto you, That whosoever

But such a practice is directly contrary to the original design of marriage, and highly injurious to the common good of mankind: *I* therefore think it necessary to restrain so dangerous a liberty, and *say unto*

[c] *Offend* or ensnare *thee.*] It is well known that this is the force of the word σκανδαλίζω which most literally signifies, to be a stumbling block in a person's way, or an occasion of his fall; and so implies much more, than merely to displease. I mention this remark, obvious as it is, because the sense of so many texts depends on attending to it. See Rom. xi. 9; xiv. 13–21. xvi. 17: 1 Cor. viii, 13; Gal. v. 11; and Rev. ii. 14.

[d] *If thy right hand offend* or ensnare *thee.*] The greatest part of Christ's auditors were poor people who lived by their daily labour; and to those the loss of a *right hand* would be a much greater calamity, than that of a *right eye:* so that there is a gradation and force in this passage, beyond what has generally been observed.

[e] *Rather than thy whole body should be thrown into hell.*] This plainly implied the doctrine of a *resurrection*, though Christ had not yet expressly taught it.

SECT. XXXIX.

Mat. V. 32.

you, That whosoever shall dismiss his wife, except it be *on the account of whoredom,*[f] *causeth her,* by a second marriage, *to commit adultery,* or at least exposeth her to great danger of doing it; *and whoever shall marry her that is* thus unlawfully *dismissed,*[g] *committeth adultery,* since the bond of the former marriage does in the account of God remain undissolved.

shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.

33 *Again, you have heard that it was said to the ancients,* (Lev. xix. 12; Deut. xxiii. 21.) *Thou shalt not perjure* or forswear *thyself, but shalt* diligently *perform unto the Lord thine oaths* and vows: and this has been expounded as extending merely to those oaths in which the name of God is expressly used, and only prohibiting the violation of such, but tolerating the use of them, even on slight occasions, so it be not in confirmation of a falsehood. *But I say unto you, Swear not at all,* in your common discourse with each other,[h] even so much as by the creatures; *either by heaven,*[i] *for it is the throne of* the glorious and holy *God; Or by the earth, for it is* under his dominion, and subject to him as *his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the*

33 Again ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.

34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne;

35 Nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is

[f] *On the account of whoredom.*] It is very evident that πορνεια, as here used, must have a more ambiguous and larger sense, than the English word *fornication*, which generally answers to it; and must be understood here of *adultery*.

[g] *Shall marry her that is* unlawfully *dismissed.*] Mr. Blair in the third volume of his sermons, p. 111, 112.) explains this clause, as intended to forbid women *divorced for adultery to marry*, which he thinks an additional punishment inflicted on persons guilty of so enormous a crime, and a wise provision for preventing bad women from committing adultery in hopes of opening their way to another more agreeable marriage. But I prefer the sense here given, because it makes this latter clause more correspondent to the former, and prevents the necessity of supposing μοιχευω to be used in two different senses so near together.

[h] *Swear not at all* in your common discourse with each other.] The opposition between this verse and the 37th. limits the prohibition to this sense; and, waving that, it would be necessary to interpret it as a re trictive, rather than an universal precept, and to consider it as more particularly levelled at the common practice of the Jews, who reckoned *swearing by the creatures* to be far more excusable than *swearing by the name of God*, and made but little scruple of the frequent use of it. For that *all swearing* is not here condemned as a thing absolutely evil, is fully evident from other passages of scripture, and of necessity must be allowed to vindicate the conduct of Christ and his apostles. Compare Mark viii. 12; Mat. xxvi. 64; Rom. i. 9; ix. 1; Gal. i. 20; 2 Cor. i. 18; and Heb. vi. 16.

[i] *Either by heaven.*] Though I allow, with the learned Heinsius, that the words μη ομοσαι ολως, may be rendered, *by no means swear, either by heaven, earth* or the like; yet it will not follow, that the words only forbid *swearing by creatures*, since ver. 37 forbids *whatever is more than yea or nay*. So that it is absolutely necessary to have recourse to some other solution of this *prohibition*, as well as of that in Jam. v. 12, where *any other oath* is forbidden; and nothing is more natural and easy than to understand it in both places, as a prohibition of the use of *oaths* in common conversation.

SECT. XXXIX.

the city of the Great King.

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

city of the Great King of Israel and of the universe: *Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, for thou* art so far from having an absolute power over it, that thou *canst not make* the colour of *one hair* of it *white or black:* so that these oaths by the creatures, if they have any sense at all, are an implicit appeal to God. Mat. V. 36.

37 But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these, cometh of evil.

But I charge you to avoid the customary use of all such oaths, as well as of those in which the name of God is directly expressed; and *let your conversation be* all plain and simple: when you affirm say, *Yes, yes;* and when you deny, *No, no: for* if you conduct yourselves as you ought, this will be sufficient to gain you credit; and you may be assured, that *whatever is more than these, cometh from the evil one,*[k] who artfully contrives, by the habitual use of swearing even by the creatures, to lessen your reverence for the solemnity of an oath, and to lead you at length to take the name of God in vain, even by perjury itself. 37

38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.

You have heard that it has been said in the law, (Deut. xix. 21.) *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:* and this statute, which was only intended to direct judges as to the penalties to be inflicted in case of violent and barbarous assaults, has been interpreted as encouraging a rigorous severe revenge of every injury a man might receive. 38

39 But I say unto you, That ye resist

But I say unto you, That when you meet with ill usage in the world, *you do not* immediately *set yourselves against the injurious person,*[l] in a posture of 39

[k] *Cometh from the evil one.*] Ex τε πονηρε εστιν will properly bear this version; and some copies read διαβολε, *cometh from the devil.* I would observe, that whether this version, or the common one be admitted, the clause before us contains a demonstration, that ver. 34. is to be explained with the limitation proposed: for it is evident, that *oaths* were in some cases not only allowed, but required by the *Mosaic law;* (see Exod. xxii. 11; Lev. v. 1; Numb. v. 19—21; and Deut. xxix. 12—14.) So that if Christ's prohibition had here referred to *swearing* in *solemn and judicial* cases, he would in these words have charged the *divine law* with establishing an immorality, which it is most absurd to suppose; and I cannot but wonder, that so obvious and decisive a thought should not have been more insisted upon in this controversy.

[l] *Do not set yourselves against the injurious person.*] So the phrase ανθιστηναι τω πονηρω may exactly be rendered; (compare 2 Tim. iii 8.) Had our Lord meant to intimate, that we should rather suffer ourselves to be murdered and our families to be ruined, than resist the villain that attempts it, he would have laid down so strange a precept in the strongest terms: and it is very unreasonable to infer it from this passage, which speaks of so trifling an injury, as a *slap on the face,* or suing a man for the value of a *waistcoat* or *cloak.*—If it be asked, whether we are universally forbidden to resist on these occasions? I answer we are; unless we be in our consciences convinced,

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hostile opposition, and with a resolution to return evil for evil; *but*, where the damage is not great, chuse rather to pass it by, though possibly it might on that account be repeated, than to enter into a rigorous prosecution of the offender. On these principles, *if any man strike thee on thy right cheek*, patiently *turn the other* 40 *to him also.*[m] *And if any one be resolved to sue thee at law, and to take away thy vest, permit him to take thy mantle too;*[n] for the loss of both would be but a trifle, in comparison of those vexations, snares, and expences, which would probably attend the continuance of the suit. 41 *And if any press thee to go* with him *one mile*, obliging thee and thy carriages to attend him on a public account,[o] rather *go with him two* more, than disturb the peace by a forcible opposition; for in many such cases as these, it will be more for your own comfort, as well as the credit of your profession, to submit, than contend.

Mat. V. 39. not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloak also.

41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

42 When thou seest any one in real necessity, and hast it in the power of thine hand to do it, *give to him that asketh thee* thy charity;[p] *and*

42 Give to him that asketh thee;

that in present circumstances, to stand on our defence will be more for the public good; and in those cases, this particular precept is superseded by the general law of universal benevolence. But I apprehend these expressions intimate that, on the whole, it will generally be for the best, to wave rigorous prosecutions on such slight occasions.

[m] *Turn the other to him also.*] This is a proverbial phrase, to express a meek submission to injuries and affronts. See Isa. l. 6; and Lam. iii. 30.

[n] *Thy mantle too.*] *Vest* and *mantle* more exactly answer to χίτων and ἱμάτιον than *coat* and *cloak*; (compare John xix. 23: and see Casaubon in loc.) and are parts of dress, under different names still retained in Barbary, Egypt, and the Levant. See Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 289—292. The mantle being much larger than the vest, must probably be more valuable; and as it would be natural for a robber on the highway to take the outer garment first, I look on this manner of expressing it, as a good argument for retaining our translation of κριθῆναι and rendering it *sue thee at law*, rather than take it in a more general way, as signifying to *strive* or *contend*: though I know it has sometimes this last signification, as Lud. Cappellus urges.

[o] *Press thee to go* with him, &c.] The word *press* seems best to answer the original ἀγγαρεύσει which is well known to be derived from the name of those officers who were commissioned for this purpose by the Persian emperors when Judea was one of their provinces. See Drusius in loc. (Compare Mat. xxvii. 32.) Among the Jews, the disciples of their wise men were excused from such services; but Christ advises his disciples not to insist on that exemption. See Lightfoot. Hor. Hebr. in loc.

[p] *Give to him that asketh thee* thy charity τῷ αἰτοῦντί σε δίδου.] Mr. Blair would refer this to ποιεῖτε, in ver. 39, and render it, *Give to the injurious person what he asketh thee*; and has a very beautiful discourse upon it in that view: but it is plainly unnecessary to limit it; and I think that, on this interpretation, it would too much coincide with verse 44. In whatever sense it be taken, it must admit of some exceptions, or it will not only be inconsistent with such precepts as require us to take care of our families, (as 1 Tim. v. 8.) but with natural justice and common sense. It is amazing, therefore, that

SECT. XXXIX. Mat. V. 43.

and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away.

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy:

do not turn away, with a severe denial, *him that would borrow of thee*;[q] for in some cases a seasonable loan may be as valuable a kindness as a gift.

By such condescensions and favours, you will generally gain the friendship of those with whom you converse; but if any should be so base, as notwithstanding all, to persist in using you ill, do not indulge to sentiments of revenge. I know *you have heard that it was said* to our fathers, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour*; (Lev. xix. 18.) *and* from thence, though in direct contradiction to many other scriptures, (Exod. xxiii. 45; Lev. xix. 17; and Prov. xxv. 21.) some have argued, as if it had been added, Thou *shalt hate thine enemy*; and the precepts for destroying the Canaanites, (Deut. vii. 16, and the like,) have been abused to countenance such an addition.[r]

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

44 *But* instead of favouring this pernicious maxim, *I say unto you, love your enemies*, and whatsoever you may suffer by them, while you abhor their sinful practices, shew a concern for the true welfare of their persons; *bless them that* in the bitterest manner *curse you*, (whether by prophane execrations in their common discourse, or by unjust anathemas in their ecclesiastical assemblies,) be ready to *do good to them that hate you, and pray for* the conversion of *them that insult you*,[s] *and persecute you:*

any who do not think themselves obliged by the literal sense of this precept, to *give* or *lend* to every idle importunate creature, whatever he asks, should insist on a rigorous interpretation of the preceding passage, from ver. 34 to 41.

[q] *Do not turn away him that would borrow of thee.*] Τον θελοντα απο σου δανισασθαι μη αποστραφης, is thus most literally rendered.

[r] The precepts for destroying the Canaanites have been abused, &c.] These precepts were of a peculiar nature; and that in particular, Deut. xxiii. 6. *Thou shalt not seek their peace nor their prosperity, all thy days for ever*, relates to avoiding throughout all generations any association with the Moabites; which was an everlasting *brand of infamy* set upon them, for the affront which, *in the matter of Peor*, they had offered to God himself, under whose conduct the Israelites were. But though it forbids any *national alliance* with them, it seems that the settlement of Ruth in Israel when she embraced the Jewish religion, (Ruth i. 16.) and the permission given to the Moabites to live as tributaries under David after the conquest of their country, (2 Sam. viii. 2.) were not at all inconsistent with this law.

[s] *That insult you*; επηρεαζοντων υμας.] As this word according to the judgment of Erasmus, Beza, and several other able critics, is derived from Αρης, the name of Mars, it may perhaps strictly answer to *dragooning* in our modern language: but as it is plainly used by St. Peter, to express *abusive language*, (1 Pet. iii. 16.) I chose to render it *insult*, which may be applied either to *injurious words* or *actions*. To *traduce* does by no means express the force of the idea. Nor can I think, with the learned Elsner, (Vol. I. p. 30, 31.) that this clause is to be interpreted chiefly of malicious prosecutions in judicial courts, though that be a sort of *insult* and *persecution*, undoubtedly comprehended among many others, and often expressed by the Greek words here used.

SECT. XXXIX. Mat. V. 45.

That you may thus approve yourselves to *be the children of your heavenly Father; for*, with the most diffusive kindness and beneficence, *he causeth his sun to arise on the evil and the good, and showereth down rain on the just and the unjust;* so that his enemies share in his providential bounties, and subsist on his daily care.

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which *is* in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 Let it be therefore your concern to imitate this extensive goodness: *for if you* only *love them that love you, what reward have ye?* or what extraordinary praise can ye expect? *Do not even the* most infamous and scandalous sinners, such as the very *publicans, do the same?*

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? Do not even the publicans the same?

47 *And if ye salute* and embrace *your brethren only,*[t] or those of the same sect, party, and interest with yourselves, *what extraordinary thing do you* practise more than the rest of mankind, though your advantages are so much greater than theirs? *Do not even the* heathens and *publicans do so?* And will not common humanity teach even the very worst of men civility to those that treat them with respect, and excite them to some sentiments of gratitude to their friends and benefactors?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others?* Do not even the publicans so?

48 You who stand in so near a relation to God, as my professed disciples, should far excel them: *be ye therefore*, in these instances of undeserved and forfeited goodness,[u] and in all other respects, as far as frail mortality will admit, *perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect;*[x] whose name you will most effectually

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

[t] *If ye salute* and embrace *your brethren only.*] The word ασπασησθε alludes to the custom of *saluting by embracing*. And when Christ cautions against confining their regards to brethren, he may perhaps obliquely glance at those prejudices which different sects had against each other, and intimate that he would not have his followers imbibe that *narrow spirit*. Would to God, the hint had been more attended to among the unhappy *subdivisions*, into which his church has been crumbled; and that we might at least advance so far, as cordially to embrace our Brethren in Christ, of whatever party or denomination they are!

[u] In these instances of undeserved and forfeited goodness.] The *love to friends*, enjoined by the Scribes and Pharisees, was very imperfect: we are to labour after a more complete resemblance to God, in *loving enemies*. Our Lord therefore afterwards expressed it in a parallel discourse, by saying, *Be ye merciful, as your Father also is merciful*, Luke vi. 36; but it is probable, he used a greater latitude of expression here, to remind us of our obligations to imitate the Divine Being in all his moral perfections.

[x] *Perfect, even as your heavenly Father is perfect.*] Many authorities are produced by Elsner, in his note on this text, to prove, not only that the heathens gave the epithet of τελειοι, or *perfect*, to many of their gods, especially the chief; but that some of their writers describe *clemency* and *goodness to enemies*, as a virtue by

honour, and whose favour you will most happily secure, by a care to imitate him to the utmost, in all the moral perfections of his nature. (Com. Eph. iv. 31, 32: v. 1.) SECT. XXXIX. Mat. V. 48.

IMPROVEMENT.

ALAS! how may we blush to call God *our Father*, while we resemble him so little! And what reason is there, on a survey of these directions of *our Lord*, to acknowledge our deficiencies and our faults! Let us review the many advantages we enjoy as *Christians*, and the engagements we are under, in the particular circumstances in which Divine Providence has placed us; and blush to think, that *we do* so little *more than others*, perhaps in many instances falling short even of the virtues of *heathens*. Verse 48, 46

Let us particularly be instructed by these lessons of our Divine Master, to recompence *good for evil:* lessons, which come with peculiar grace from his mouth, as he was himself the kindest *friend* to his most inveterate *enemies*, and bore and forgave more, than any but himself could possibly do. 43, 45

Let us, who are his *disciples*, abhor *contention* and *revenge*. Let us not prosecute every little *injury* to the utmost, nor govern ourselves by those false maxims of prudence and honour, which pride and self-love have introduced on the ruins of real *Christianity*. Let us not, even in the most legal methods, seek the punishment of those who have *wronged us*, except in circumstances in which we are in our conscience persuaded it will, on the whole, be greater *charity* to animadvert on the offence than to pass it by; and even then, let us act in a calm and dispassionate manner, pitying and loving the persons of the *injurious*, even while, for the sake of society, we prosecute their crimes. 38, 42

If this be our duty towards our *enemies*, how inexcusable are we, if we are cold and insensible to our *friends!* and how much worse than *publicans* themselves, if we do not *love them that love us*, and *do good* to those from whom we have *received* it. Happy is that *Christian*, to whom the God of nature hath given a heart 46

which mortals make the nearest approach to divine perfection.—These words conclude Christ's excellent vindication of the law, from the corrupt glosses of the Jewish teachers. I know it has been objected to it that, considering the many figurative expressions used in it, we might as easily trace out the duties recommended by the *light of reason* alone, as adjust the sense of such obscure and hyperbolical precepts. But if it were really so, (which I cannot grant), it is to be remembered, that the chief design of the gospel is not to inform us what is *justice*, *humanity*, and *charity*, in particular cases, (which a view of present circumstances can alone discover,) but to awaken a regard to the known, though neglected, dictates of *natural religion* on these heads; and this may be most effectually done, by such animated and sprightly exhortations as these, especially when considered as coming from a Person, whose authority and love concur to demand our attention and obedience.

SECT. XXXIX.

so turned to sentiments of benevolence that, in all these instances, *love* is *a law unto itself!*

Yet let us remember, that the whole of our duty is not comprehended in these *social regards*. The great Author of our being, who hath endowed us with rational faculties, justly requires that we assert their empire over the meaner powers of appetite and passion. We see that he forbids not only gross enormities, as *adultery*, (which though so unaccountably spared by the laws of many *Christian* countries, the *heathens* themselves have condemned as a capital crime, and which some of the most barbarous nations have esteemed infamous), but the *unchastity* of *the eye*, and of *the heart*. Let us then earnestly pray, that God would *create in us a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within us*; (Psal. li. 10.) and let us maintain a most resolute guard over our senses and our thoughts, remembering that there is no other alternative, but that the *dearest* of our *lusts* must be *mortified* and subdued, or our *whole persons be cast into hell*.

Verse 27, 28

29

30 Elevate our affections, O Lord, to nobler objects than those which are suited merely to animal nature! Teach us to *keep under the body, and bring it into subjection*, (1 Cor. ix. 27.) that we may not finally *be cast away* from thy presence, and fall into that dreadful state where every drop of sinful pleasure will be recompensed with full vials of misery and despair!

SECT. XL.

Our Lord having thus vindicated the Mosaic law, proceeds, in his divine discourse on the Mount, to caution his disciples against vain-glory in alms-deeds, prayer, and fasting. Mat. VI. 1—18.

MAT. VI. 1.

SECT. XL.

Mat. VI. 1

MAT. VI. 1.

TAKE heed that ye do not your alms

OUR Lord proceeding in his discourse to caution them against vain-glory, said unto them *Take heed*, in general, *that you practise not your righteousness*,[a] or perform not any religious action, in an ostentatious manner *be-*

[a] *Practise not your righteousness.*] As some copies, and very ancient versions read δικαιοσυνην *righteousness*, instead of ελεημοσυνην, *alms-deeds*, and several of the fathers quote it so, I chuse, with Beza, to follow that reading; because it prevents the appearance of a tautology in the following words, and makes this verse a general and very proper introduction to the remaining part of the section, in which the caution is branched out into the particular heads of *alms, prayer*, and *fasting*. (See Dr. Mill. in loc.) —Nevertheless I by no means insist on the change: but if it be admitted, I cannot acquiesce in the criticism of a learned friend, who would explain *righteousness*, as here signifying *charity*, or *liberality*:

SECT. XI.

Mat. VI. 1.

before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

fore men, making it your chief end *to be viewed* and admired *by them*: or *otherwise*, if this caution be neglected *you* will *have no reward from your heavenly Father*, who knows all the secret principles of your heart, and indispensably requires the greatest uprightness and sincerity there.

2 Therefore when thou dost *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men: verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

2 The caution is so important, that I shall illustrate it in various particulars. *When therefore*, for instance, *thou performest* [*thine*] *almsdeeds*, *do not*, as it were, *sound a trumpet before thee*, and make proclamation to all around, to induce them to take notice of it; *as* it is customary for *the hypocrites* to *do in the public assemblies*,[b] *and in the streets*, *that*, acting their part as on an open theatre,[c] *they may be applauded of men*, who are the spectators of their liberality: *verily I say unto you*, That in this empty sound of human praise, *they have their poor reward*,[d] and must expect no acceptance and recompense from God. *But when thou art doing* [*thine*] *alms*, use the utmost privacy; and, if it be possible, *let not thy left hand know what thy right hand is doing*,[e] when it is stretched out to these charitable purposes; and far from publishing it with vain affectation, conceal it, as far as may be, from thy nearest friends:

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

because, though I am well aware it has that signification sometimes, (I think not so often as some have supposed), yet admitting it here would destroy that beautiful variety between this and the following verse, which I have endeavoured to illustrate in the paraphrase, and which makes it so proper an introduction to this part of our Lord's sermon.

[b] *In the public assemblies.*] It is certain, that the word συναγωγη may be taken in this extent; and though it is most probable it may even here refer to *religious assemblies*, yet we may recollect on this occasion, that it is a known custom in the eastern nations, to distribute alms, when they were going to enter on public counsels.—The phrase of *sounding a trumpet before them*, seems only a figurative expression, to represent their doing it in a noisy ostentatious way; as it is certain, that to do a thing *with the sound of a trumpet* is sometimes used proverbially to express a public ostentation. See Elsner in loc.

[c] Acting their part as on an open theatre.] Erasmus and Beza very justly observe, that δοξασθωσι in the verse before is a theatrical word; and υποκριται is well known to signify *players disguised* (as the Grecian actors used to be, *in masks*; not to say that the *sounding a trumpet*, may allude to the *music* of the stage. I have endeavoured to express this in the phrases here used in the paraphrase.

[d] *They have their reward.*] Sir Norton Knatchbull earnestly contends, that απεχουσι τον μισθον αυτων, ought to be rendered, *they fall short of their reward*: but the word απεχω is plainly used in the sense, in which our translators take it, Luke vi. 24; Philip. iv. 18; and Philem. ver. 15; and it is with peculiar propriety, that *human applause* is here called *their reward*, as being that which they chuse and seek. See Beza's elegant note on the words.

[e] *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand is doing.*] It is said, that the poor's chest stood on the right hand, as they entered the synagogues, to which some suppose the words to allude. It is plainly a proverbial expression, of strict care to conceal an action.

SECT. XL. Mat. VI. 4.

That thine alms may be performed *in secret*; *and thy Father who sees in secret*, and knows every circumstance of your most retired actions, *will himself* be ready to honour and *reward thee* another day, and that *openly* before the assembled world.

4 That thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.

5 *And* again, *when thou prayest*, (as if thou art my disciple indeed, thou often wilt), *thou shalt not be as the hypocrites*, who discover on all occasions the vanity of their hearts; *for* even when performing their particular, and those that ought to be their secret devotions, *they love to pray standing in the public assemblies* in sight of numbers of people, *and* fixing them exactly to one constant hour, contrive to be catched, as it were, just at that sacred time;[f] not only in the common places of resort, but *in the corners of the streets*, where several ways meet; *that they may* thus *be* sure of being *viewed by* a great number of beholders; but howsoever, upon this account, they may indeed be admired of *men*, as persons of singular piety, yet *verily I say unto you, That* in this admiration of those that observe them, *they have* all

5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are*; for they love to pray standing in the synagogue, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men: verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

6 *their reward. But thou*, O my disciple, whoever thou art, *when thou prayest*, and does not intend it as social exercise of devotion, withdraw from the sight and intercourse of men, and *enter into thy closet*, or any other retired apartment;[g] *and having shut thy door*, to prevent interruption, and exclude spectators, *pray* with a holy freedom of soul *to thy Father who is* with thee *in secret, and thy Father, who* always *sees in secret* as distinctly as in the most open scene of action, *will* regard these addresses with peculiar pleasure, as the emotions of a

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy

[f] Contrive to be catched at that sacred time.] Thus the late pious and eloquent Mr. Grove explains, and finely illustrates this text, in his discourse on Secret Prayer, p. 3, 4. It is plain, this custom still prevails among the Mahometans; as Pfeiffer has observed, Theolog. Mohammed. Oper. p. 848—974; and Bobovius in his Turkish Liturgy, § 1. See a remarkable illustration of it, in Mr. Addison's Freeholder, No. 59.

[g] *Enter into thy closet*, or any other retired apartment.] Ταμειον signifies closet, chamber, wardrobe, or any other separate place; and Mr. Blair piously conjectures, that Christ might use a word of such latitude, that none might omit *secret prayer* for want of so convenient an apartment as they could wish to retire into. It will, I hope, be observed, that many remarks of this kind proceed on a supposition, that the spirit of God directed the apostles in their writings, to chuse such Greek words as most exactly corresponded to those in the Jewish language, which Christ used.

SECT. XL.

Mat. VI. 6.

Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

pious and sincere heart; and will another day *reward thee openly* for these duties, which were so entirely referred to the views of honouring and pleasing him.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

7 *But when you pray, do not use a vain multiplicity of words*[h] *as* it is usual for *the heathens* to *do* in the invocation of their deities; *for they* foolishly *think, they shall be heard* in their addresses to them *for their speaking much.*

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

8 *Be not ye therefore* in this respect *like them*, since you are so much better instructed in the divine nature than they, and cannot but know, that your prayers are intended to affect your own hearts that they may be fit to receive blessings, and not to inform or work upon the heart of God: *for your* heavenly *Father* is ready to bestow his blessings on you, and always *knows what you* really *want*, even *before you ask him*; which therefore should teach you to avoid whatever may look like prescribing to him, by too minute and repeated a detail of particulars.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name:

9 *Thus therefore pray ye*, or to this effect at least, and in this plain, concise, and humble manner, if not in these very words: "*Our Father, who art* seated on a throne of glory *in* "the highest *heaven*; while we bow before "thine awful presence with the humblest reve- "rence, we would nevertheless approach thee "with a filial confidence, as our bountiful and "compassionate Parent; uniting our supplica- "tions to thee, with hearts full of brotherly "love, and asking for each other the blessings "we seek for ourselves. We would so re- "member our relation to thee, as to be above "all things concerned for thy glory: and there- "fore make it our first petition, *May thy* il- "lustrious *name be sanctified!* May the whole "race of mankind, yea, the whole world of in- "telligent creatures, pay that dutiful venera-

[h] *Do not use a vain multiplicity of words, μη βαττολογησητε.*] Beza has well explained the etymology of the word; and Dr. Hammond shews how applicable it was to the devotion of the Gentiles. (Compare 1 Kings xviii. 26; and Acts xix. 34.) It is plain, that the Jews were running into the same fault, if we may judge by their oldest Liturgies. (See Le Clerc, in loc. and Selden de Syned. lib. i. cap. xii. p. 467, & seq.) And Dr. Wotton has illustrated the text so well, if it be considered as referring to them, that one could wish he had produced some better authorities than he has done for reading υποκριται rather than εθνικοι. See Wot. Misc. Vol. I. p. 186—188.

SECT. XL.

Mat. VI. 10.

" tion to thy divine majesty,[i] which thy matchless perfections so justly require! And for this purpose, *may* that *thy kingdom*, which thou art now introducing among men, more perfectly *come*[k] may it be established with greater efficacy, be more clearly discovered, and more resolutely pursued! *May thy will*, always wise and always gracious, *be done, as in heaven, so likewise upon earth*; and may we mortals be taught to regard it with a resignation, acquiescence, and obedience,[l] resembling that of the heavenly spirits! And as for ourselves, O Lord, we would not seek the great things of life, we would not be anxious about its distant futurities, but humbly entreat, thou wouldest open that bountiful hand on which we continually depend, and wouldest *give us this day our daily bread*,[m] providing a competent supply for our present necessities, and teaching us to refer the rest to thy continual paternal care! *And* though we have in many respects been disobedient and ungrateful children, yet we beseech thee, O most compassionate Father, to *forgive us our* offences, whereby we stand chargeable, as it were in thy book, with *debts* which we can never clear: yet do thou freely forgive them all, *as we also* desire to *forgive our debtors*, even all that have in any respect of-

10 Thy kingdom come: thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven:

11 Give us this day our daily bread:

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors:

[i] That dutiful veneration to thy divine majesty.] The *name* of God seems a phrase, nearly answering to that of *majesty*, when applied to an earthly sovereign; as Mr. Blair has justly observed, Serm. Vol. IV. p. 42.

[k] More perfectly *come*.] It is reasonable to believe, *this petition* had a sense peculiar to the period in which it was prescribed, and that we, under this perfect revelation of the gospel, cannot properly use it precisely with the same meaning: but so extensive a phrase may justly admit of other senses, at least by *accommodation*, as the Assembly's Catechism, with great propriety illustrates it; and I believe there are few, who decline the use of *this prayer* on this account, who do not often use scripture phrases with a much greater latitude.

[l] Resignation, acquiescence, and obedience.] I have here joined these several expressions, because I am not able certainly to determine, which was most directly intended. There is a great deal of beauty and spirit, in the interpretation which Mr. Addison gives of this petition: Spectat. Vol. III. No. 207.

[m] *Our daily bread*; τον αρτον ημων τον επιουσιον.] I can see no reason for changing our received translation; and cannot but acquiesce in Mr. Mede's remark, that επιουσιος signifies what is *sufficient* for our *present support* and subsistence, as περισσιος signifies *abundant*: so that *this petition* is nearly parallel to that of Agur, Prov. xxx. 8. (See Mede's Works, p. 125.) This is a most excellent lesson, to teach us, on the one hand, moderation in our desires, and on the other, an humble dependence on divine providence for the most necessary supplies, be our possessions, or our abilities, ever so great.

SECT. XL.

Mat. VI. 13.

" fended and injured us: yea, such pardon may
" we receive from thee, our God, as we are
" willing to impart to them![n] *And do not bring*
" *us into* circumstances of pressing *temptation*,
" lest our virtue should be vanquished, and our
" souls endangered by them; *but* if we must
" be thus tried, do thou graciously *rescue us*
" *from* the power of *the evil one*,[o] that he may
" not triumph in our sin and ruin! These things
" we know that thou canst do for thy children,
" and we are humbly bold to hope thou wilt do
" them for us: *for thine is the kingdom* of uni-
" versal nature,[p] *and the* fulness of almighty
" *power, and the glory* of infinite perfection;
" and to thee be the praise of all ascribed *for*
" *ever. Amen.* So may it be! We most sin-
" cerely and earnestly desire that thou mayest
" be glorified, and our petitions heard and ac-
" cepted."

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Let this be the model of your prayers, for these are the most important blessings you can ask. And let me particularly charge you, to remember the view and connection in which I have taught you to ask the pardon of your sins: *for if you forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will also forgive you*, supposing that forgiveness to proceed from a truly religious principle: *But if you do not forgive men*

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

15 But if ye forgive not men their

[n] *Such pardon—as we are willing to impart to them.*] It is hardly possible to imagine a more effectual expedient, to promote the *forgiveness* of injuries than this, of making it a part of our *daily prayer*, to ask *such pardon* from God as we impart to our offending brother. For in this circumstance, every malicious purpose against him would turn *this petition* into an *imprecation*, by which we should, as it were, bind down the wrath and vengeance of God upon ourselves.

[o] *Rescue us from the evil one.*] Ῥῦσαι ἡμας ἀπο του πονηρου may literally be rendered thus. For this signification of ὁ πονηρος, see note [b], p. 201.

[p] *For thine is the kingdom*, &c.] Though I am sensible there is some reason to doubt of the genuineness of this *doxology*, notwithstanding all that Mr. Jones (in his History of the Canon, Vol. I. p. 141, 142.) has urged in its defence. (See Dr. Mill. in loc. and Mr. Mallet, in his notes on Scripture, Vol. I. p. 133, & seq.) Yet it is certainly very ancient; and, as Bishop Hopkins, Mr. Blair, and other excellent writers, have well observed, so admirably suits and enforces every preceding petition, that I could not persuade myself to omit it. And I hope the learned reader will excuse me, if, in matters of moment, I sometimes seem over-cautious of omitting some passages which are indeed wanting in many ancient manuscripts, and omitted by some celebrated commentators, ancient as well as modern. I apprehend I shall have done my part, in thus hinting at the doubt which learned men have entertained concerning them, where I conceive the reasons for such doubt to be considerable. —For the word *amen*, as it signifies *truth*, see note [z] on John i. 51, p. 134. When added to the conclusion of our prayers, it is intended to express the sincerity and earnestness with which we desire the blessing we ask, with some cheerfulness of hope as to the success of our petitions.

SECT. XL.

their offences, but continue to cherish resentment, and to seek revenge, *neither will* that God whom you call *your* heavenly *Father*, own you for his genuine offspring, and *forgive* you *your offences*; but by using the petition I have now been prescribing, you will in effect bind down a curse upon yourselves.

Mat. VI. 15.

trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 I would also apply the general advice I before gave to fasting as well as to prayer; and would *again* exhort you, That when you keep a private *fast*, (as I conclude my disciples will often do,) you *be not like the hypocrites*, going about with a dejected melancholy face, and *putting on a dismal air*; *for* upon these occasions *they* emaciate, contract, and *deform their countenances*,[p] *that* by their sad and mournful looks *they may appear to men to fast*, and may be esteemed as persons of unusual mortification and holiness: *verily I say unto you*, *That* in this notice that is taken of them by their fellow creatures, *they have* all *their reward*, and have not any to expect from God. 17 *But thou*, O my disciple, *when thou keepest* such *a fast*, and comest from thy devout retirement, dress thyself just as thou dost at other times; *anoint thy head* with oil, *and wash thy face*,[q] instead of fouling it with ashes; 18 *That thou mayest not appear to men as one that fasteth*, *but* only *to thy Father who is in secret*; *and thy Father who sees in secret*, and observes what passes in retirement, as the surest test of mens true characters, *will* not fail to *reward thee openly* for thy genuine and unaffected devotion.

16 Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance; for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast: verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face:

18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

IMPROVEMENT.

Ver. 1. 5, 16

LET us learn from these repeated admonitions of our blessed *Redeemer*, what is the only acceptable *principle* of every religi-

[p] Emaciate, contract, and *deform their countenances.*] I know not any word in our language which exactly answers to αφανιζουσι in this connection. It is rendered *corrupt*, in ver. 20 (compare Acts xiii. 41; Heb. viii. 13; and James iv. 14.) and properly signifies to *change*, *spoil*, and *consume*; and is with peculiar elegance applicable to such an *alteration* of the natural countenance, as proceeded from their *emaciating* themselves, and contracting their faces into a *dismal form* — The learned author of Fortuita Sacra, p. 13—22, has rendered it unnecessary for me, to add any thing more on this or the following verse.

[q] *Anoint thy head* with oil, *and wash thy face.*] This was usual among the Jews, not only at *feasts*, but at other times, compare Ruth iii 3; 2 Sam. xiv 2; and Judith xvi. 8. On the other hand, *dust and ashes* were often used in times of deep *mourning*, or public *fasting*, which must sadly *deform the countenance*; see 2 Sam. xiii. 19; Esth. iv. 1, 3; Isa. lxi. 3; Dan. ix. 3; and Jonah iii. 6.

SECT. XL.

ous action; namely, a desire to approve ourselves to *God* in it: and let us particularly bring it into the instances which it is here recommended.

Verse 2, 6

Our Lord takes it for granted, that his disciples would be both *charitable* and *devout*. Let us cultivate both these branches of the *Christian* temper, and avoid *ostentation* in both; as remembering the day approaches, when every one of us must be *made manifest* in his true character before the tribunal of *Christ*.—And, oh, what discoveries will then be opened upon the world! How many specious masks will be plucked off, that the *hypocrite*'s character may appear in its native deformity! And, on the other hand, how many *secret acts* of piety and benevolence, which have been industriously concealed from human observation, will then shine forth in all their glory, celebrated and 18
rewarded by *God himself, who sees in secret*, and whose eye penetrates all the recesses of our houses and our hearts!

There may our praise and our portion be! In the mean time, let us with humble pleasure obey the call of our divine master, and be often addressing our *heavenly Father*, in such language as he hath taught us; *entering* for secret exercises of devotion *into our closet, and shutting our door*, excluding (as far as pos- 6
sible,) every thought which would interrupt us in these sacred and happy moments. From thence let our *prayers* daily come before the throne *like incense*, and *the lifting up of our hands be as* the morning and *the evening sacrifice*. (Psal. cxli. 2.)

Christ himself has condescended to teach us to *pray*. At- 9, 13
tentive to his precepts, animated by his example, and emboldened by his intercession, let us learn and practise the lesson. Shed abroad on our hearts, O Lord, thy *Spirit of adoption*, which may *teach us to cry, Abba, Father!* to draw nigh to thee with filial reverence and confidence, and with fraternal charity for each other, even for the *whole family*, to whom thou graciously ownest the relation! Inspire us with that zeal for thy glory, which may render the honour of *thy name*, the prosperity of *thy kingdom*, and the accomplishment of *thy will*, far dearer to us than any interest of our own! On thee may we maintain a cheerful dependence for our *daily bread*, and *having food and raiment, be therewith content!* (1 Tim. vi. 8.) most solicitously seeking the *pardon* of our *past sins*, and the influences of thy grace to preserve us from *future temptations*, or to secure us in them! And may our sense of that need in which we stand of *forgive-* 14, 15
ness from thee, dispose us cordially to *forgive each other*, especially as thou hast wisely and graciously made this the necessary means of receiving our own pardon! Our corrupted hearts are too little disposed for these sentiments; but may God's almighty power produce and cherish them in us! and while the

comfort is ours, may *all the glory* be his, *through Jesus Christ our Lord!* Amen.

SECT. XLI.

Our Lord cautions his disciples against the love of the present world, and urges a variety of lively and convincing arguments to dissuade them from anxiety about the morrow. Mat. VI. 19. *to the end.*

MAT. VI. 19.

SECT. XLI. Mat. VI. 19.

I WOULD also take this opportunity of cautioning you, my hearers, against that covetous temper, which the Pharisees are so ready to indulge, (compare Luke xvi. 14; and Mat. xxiii. 14.) and therefore add, *Do not* make it your great care to *lay up for yourselves treasures* here *on earth*, where so many accidents may deprive you of them; *where the moth*, for instance, may spoil your finest garments, *and* a devouring *canker* may *consume* your corn, or may corrupt the very metals you have hoarded;[a] *and where thieves* may *dig through* the strongest walls that you have raised about them,
20 *and* may *steal* them away. *But* build your happiness on a nobler and more certain foundation, and *store up for yourselves treasures in heaven*, where none of these accidents can happen; *where neither moth nor canker can consume* them, *and where thieves cannot break in, nor steal* them away; but the arms of everlasting power and love shall secure you from every calamity and invasion.
21 The influence which this advice will have on your whole conduct, should engage you to attend more diligently to it; *for where* that which you account *your* chief *treasure is, there will your heart also be*, and thither will the tendency and series of your actions be referred. See
22

MAT. VI 19. LAY not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven; where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through, nor steal.

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

[a] *Canker* may *consume* your corn, or corrupt the very metals you have hoarded.] The word βρωσις is by some translated *smut* or *weavel*, and is supposed to signify any little insect, that gets into corn and eats it. Mr. Blair seems to understand it so, and thinks our Lord here refers to clothes, grain, and gold, as the chief treasures respectively obnoxious to moth, smut and thieves; which may seem the more probable, as a different word ιος, is used for *rust*, Jam. v. 3. But as βρωσις properly signifies any thing that *eats into* another substance, I rather chose to render it *canker*, which has much the same ambiguity; and to paraphrase it in a manner including both the senses.

SECT. XLI. Mat. VI. 22.

22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness: if therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no

therefore that you form a right judgment on so important an article, and do not over-value the world and its enjoyments. For as *the eye is the lamp of the* whole *body*; and *therefore*, on the one hand, *if thine eye be clear*,[b] and free from any vitiating humour, *thy whole body will be full of light*; *But*, on the other hand, *if* 23 *thine eye be distempered, thy whole body will be full of darkness*: so it is with respect to the practical judgment you form as to the worth of earthly and heavenly enjoyments. *If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!* and if the maxims you lay down to yourselves are wrong, how very erroneous must your conduct be!

And do not impose upon yourselves so far, 24 as to imagine that your hearts can be equally divided between heaven and earth: for as *no man can serve two masters* whose interests and commands are directly contrary to each other; *but will* quickly appear, *either* comparatively to *hate the one, and love the other*; *or*, by degrees, at least, *will* grow weary of so disagreeable a situation, so as to *adhere* entirely *to the one, and* quite *neglect* and abandon *the other*: so you will find *you cannot* at the same time *serve God and mammon*,[c] that unworthy idol to which so many are devoting their hearts and their pursuits.

And I would charge you *therefore* to take 25 heed, that your affections be not engaged in a service so inconsistent with religion and true happiness; and in particular, *I say unto you*,[d]

[b] *If thine eye be clear*, &c.] Some commentators have explained this, as if our Lord intended here to urge the practice of *liberality*, as what would have a great influence on the whole of a man's character and conduct; and suppose it illustrated by all those passages, where *an evil eye* signifies a grudging temper, and *a good eye* a bountiful disposition, (compare Deut. xv. 9; Prov. xxiii. 6; xxviii. 22; and xxii. 9. Hebr.) and also by those texts in which *simplicity* is put for *liberality*, (Rom. xii. 8; and 2 Cor. viii. 2; ix. 11—13. Gr.) See Hammond, Whitby, L'Enfant, and Beausobre, in loc. But the sense given above, appears most natural, as well as most extensive.—I have rendered ἁπλοῦς *clear*, rather than *single*, as less ambiguous, and with more evident propriety applied to the *eye*: it is opposed to an eye evergrown with a *film*, which would obstruct the sight.

[c] *God and mammon.*] *Mammon* is a Syriac word for *riches*, which our Lord beautifully represents as a person, whom the folly of men had deified. It is well known, the Greeks had a fictitious *god of wealth*; but I cannot find, that he was ever directly worshipped in Syria under the name of *mammon*.

[d] *Therefore I say unto you*, &c.] A late writer, who takes upon him, by the strength of his own reason, to reject at pleasure what the apostles believed and taught, strangely complains of a want of connection between this and the preced-

SECT. XLI.

Mat. VI. 25.

Be not distressed with *anxious* cares *about your* subsistence in *life*,[e] *what you shall eat, and what you shall drink*, when your present stock of provisions is gone; *nor with respect to your body, what you shall put on* when the garments you have are worn out. *Is not life* a better and *more* valuable gift *than food, and the body than raiment?* And if it be, why should you not trust that almighty and gracious Being who formed your bodies and inspired them with life, to maintain the work of his own hands?

thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 You may surely do it, when you reflect on his care of the inferior creatures. *Look on the birds of the air*, for instance, that are now flying around you:[f] *for* though they are gay and cheerful to a proverb, yet do *they neither sow nor reap: nor* do they, like some other animals, *gather* a stock of food *into hoards*, to lay up for winter: *and yet* the rich providence of *your heavenly Father* plentifully *feedeth them;* and *are not you* his children, *much more valuable* in his sight *than they?* as well as much better furnished with means of providing for yourselves?[g] Why then should you at any time suspect his 27 care? And after all, this immoderate carefulness is useless, as well as unnecessary; for

26 Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them: are not ye much better than they?

27 Which of you

ing verse. But can there be any better reason assigned against immoderate *anxiety*, than *this*, that such a subjection to *mammon* as this expresses, is utterly inconsistent with the love and service of God?

[e] *Be not anxious about your* subsistence *in life.*] It is certain that the word μεριμναω generally signifies an *excessive anxiety*; (see Luke x. 41; xii. 11; xxi. 34; and Phil. iv. 6. and indeed almost every other place where it is used); which is agreeable to the derivation of it. There is no need therefore to say, (as Archbishop Tillotson, Vol. II. p. 255. and Dr. Clerk in his sermons Vol. III. p. 116, &c. *seq.* do,) that our Lord only addresses this to *his apostles*, who were to cast themselves on an extraordinary Providence, without being any wise concerned themselves for their support. Mr. Blair has well proved the contrary at large in his excellent Appendix to his fourth Sermon Vol. I. p. 55, &c. *seq.* and it is easy to observe, that the arguments our Lord urges, contain nothing peculiar to their case, but are built on considerations applicable to *all Christians*: compare Phil. iv. 6; and 1 Pet. v. 7; as also Luke xxii. 35, 36; and Acts xx. 34: from whence it appears that the *apostles themselves* were not entirely to neglect a prudent care for their own subsistence, in dependence on miraculous provisions.

[f] *The birds of the air* now flying around you.] It is not so proper to render πετεινα *fowls*, as that word generally signifies the *larger kind of birds*, and especially those under the care of men.—For mentioning *the birds*, as then in their sight; see the latter part of note [c] on Mat. v. 14. p. 212.

[g] *Are not you much more valuable than they*, as well as much better furnished with means of providing for yourselves?] Ουχ υμεις μαλλον διαφερετε αυτων, may be rendered *Have not you greatly the advantage of them?* which may refer to mens being capable of *sowing, reaping*, and *gathering into barns*, which the *birds* are not: and though I rather prefer the former sense, I thought it not improper to hint at the other; as I have done in many other places, where such ambiguities have occurred.

SECT. XLI.

Mat. VI. 27.

by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature?

which of you can, by [*all his*] *anxiety, add to his age* or vigour,[h] so much as *one cubit*, or even the smallest measure or moment beyond what God shall appoint? Nay, it is much more probable, you should rather impair than strengthen your constitution by indulging such a temper, which sometimes brings on grey hairs and death before their time.

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

And as for raiment, why are you anxious 28 [*about that?*] Observe not only the animal, but what is yet much lower, the vegetable part of the creation; and particularly, *consider* there *the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not* to prepare the materials of their covering, *nor do they spin* or weave them into garments:

29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Yet I say unto you, That even the magnificent 29 *Solomon, in all his* royal *glory*, when sitting on his throne of ivory and gold, (1 Kings x. 18.) *was not arrayed* in garments of so pure a white,[i] and of such curious workmanship, *as one of these* lilies presents to your view.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he*

And if God 30 *so clothe the grass of the field*, and shelters and adorns the flower[k] that grows wild amongst it, *which is* [*flourishing*] *to-day, and* perhaps *to-morrow is thrown into the furnace*, or the still,[l]

[h] *Can add to his age.*] It is well known, that this is frequently the signification of the word ηλικια; there being many places where it is evident, that it is used for *age*, (as John ix. 21—23; and Heb. xi. 11.) and certainly it makes the best sense here: for it is seldom found, that persons are solicitous about growing *a cubit taller*.—I confess *a cubit of age* is not a common phrase among us, though *an inch of time* be sometimes used; and in this view had I rendered *cubit* by *moment*, as a learned friend who remarked on this passage advised, it would have been very justifiable.

[i] *Was not arrayed* in garments of so pure a white.] As the eastern princes were often clothed in white robes, and they were generally counted a magnificent apparel, compare Esth. viii. 15; and Dan. vii. 9.) I think it more natural to explain the words thus, (as Calmet does in his Dissert. Vol. II. p. 230.) than to suppose with Ray (on the Creation, p. 107) that κρινα signified tulips of various colours, or a purple kind of lily. Some have indeed quoted Cant. v. 13, in support of the last interpretation; but that text may refer to the fragrancy of those flowers, rather than their hue.

[k] Shelters and adorns the flower.] The word αμφιεννυσιν, which we render *clothe*, properly expresses the putting on a complete dress that surrounds the body on all sides, and is used with peculiar beauty, for that elegant, yet strong external membrane, which (like the skin in the human body,) at once adorns the tender structure of the vegetable, and likewise guards it from the injuries of the weather. Every microscope in which a *flower* is viewed, affords a lively comment on this text.

[l] *Is thrown into the furnace* or the still.] I apprehend that this may be as properly the signification of the word κλιβανον as *oven*, and that the sense will thus appear to be more easy; for it can hardly be supposed, that grass or flowers should be thrown into the oven the day after they are cut down; unless it was the custom, to heat their *ovens* with *new hay*, which seems not very natural. Elmer indeed renders χορτον *stubble*; but that seems not to suit the context.

SECT. XLI.

Mat. VI. 30.

[*will he*] *not much more* [*clothe*] *you*, his servants, and his children, *O ye of little faith!* that you should be so diffident as to distrust his care, or in the least to doubt of it!

not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

31 *Be not ye therefore* any more distracted, and torn in pieces (as it were,) with *anxious* and unbelieving thoughts, *saying*, *what shall we eat*, *or what shall we drink?* How is it we shall be provided for, *or what shall we wear*, in the remainder of our lives? (*For* it is really beneath your character as my disciples, thus to distress yourselves on this account: *the heathen*, who are strangers to the promises of God's covenant, and to the hopes of his glory, do indeed *seek after all these things*; and it is no wonder, that their minds are taken up with them: but you have greater business to employ you, and higher hopes to animate and encourage you;) *for* you may be assured, that as *your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things* while you dwell in the body, he will not fail to provide them for you.

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 *But* I exhort you, that you turn your cares into a nobler channel, and *seek*, in the *first* place, and with the greatest earnestness and concern, *the kingdom of God and his righteousness*;[m] labouring to secure an interest in the promises of the gospel yourselves, and to promote its reception among others, that by submitting to the righteousness of God, you may be thus accepted as righteous before him: in that you will be sure of success; *and* as for *all these* little *things* of which I have now been speaking; they *shall be added to you over and above*,[n] and, as it were, thrown in amidst a crowd of far more valuable blessings. And *therefore*, while you faithfully attend to this, *be not anxious* even *for the mor-*

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

35 Take therefore no thought for the

[m] *The kingdom of God and his righteousness.*] By *righteousness*, Dr. Sykes here understands the Messiah, *the righteous Branch*, who was to *rule in righteousness*, and in whose days *the righteous were to flourish* (see Dr. Sykes on Christianity, p. 35; 36): But it seems more natural, to interpret it, of that way of *becoming righteous* which the gospel proposes, and which St. Paul, by a phrase exactly equivalent to this, calls *the righteousness of God*. Com. Rom. x. 3; and Phil. iii. 9.

[n] *Added over and above.*] This seems to be the exact import of the word προστεθήσεται, than which expression nothing could have been more proper; for these *temporal blessings* are by no means essential to the stipulations of the *covenant of grace*, but are entirely to be referred to the divine good pleasure, to add or withhold, as God shall see fit. Compare 1 Kings iii. 11—13.

morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

row, and much less for future years: *for* indeed *the morrow shall provide for itself*; that Providence which hath taken care of you formerly, shall send in new supplies, and suggest new expedients, as new necessities and difficulties require them: and, in the mean time, you need not anticipate future trials; for without such an addition, *sufficient for the* present *day* [*is*] *the evil of it*, and it is well if you have wisdom and grace proportionable even to that. SECT. XLI. Mat. VI. 34.

IMPROVEMENT.

How kind are these *precepts of our* blessed *Redeemer!* the substance of which is indeed but this, *Do thyself no harm.* Let us not be so ungrateful to him, and so injurious to ourselves, as to harass and oppress our minds, with that burden of *anxiety*, which he has so graciously taken off. Every verse and clause we have been reading, speaks at once to the understanding and the heart. We will not therefore indulge these unnecessary, these useless, these mischievous *cares*; we will not borrow the *anxieties* and distresses of *the morrow*, to aggravate those of the *present day:* but rather will we cheerfully repose ourselves on that *heavenly Father* who *knows that we need these things*, and has given us *life*, which is *more than meat; and the body*, which is *more than raiment*; and thus instructed in the philosophy of our heavenly Master, will learn a lesson of faith and cheerfulness, from every *bird of the air*, and every *flower of the field.* Verse, 34, 31, 32, 34, 25, 26, 28

Let the *Gentiles* that know not God, perplex their minds with unworthy suspicions, or bow them down to the ignoble servitude of *mammon*, that base rival of our living *Jehovah:* but we, far from desiring to share our hearts and our services between *two* such contrary *masters*, will cheerfully devote them to him, whose right to them is so infinitely beyond all room for any contest. Let us *take heed and beware of covetousness*, and make it our business not to *hoard up earthly* and corruptible *treasures*, but *first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness:* so shall *other things be added* for present subsistence; and so shall we *lay up in store* an incorruptible *treasure in heaven*, in which we shall be rich and happy; when the *riches of this world* are consumed with their owners, and the whole *fashion of it is passed away.* 24, 19, 20, 33

While these divine maxims are spreading their *light* about us, let our *eye be clear* to behold them, and our heart open to receive them; and let us cautiously guard against those deceitful principles of action, which would give a wrong bias to all our pursuits, and turn *the light which is in us* into a fatal and incurable *darkness.* 22, 23

SECT. XLII.

Our Lord proceeds in his discourse to caution his disciples against rash judgment, and to exhort them to impartiality, prudence, prayer, and resolution; and warns them against seducers. Mat. VII. 1—20.

MAT. VII. 1.

SECT. XLII.

Mat. VII. 1.

YOU, my disciples, live in a very censorious age, and the scribes and Pharisees, who are in the highest esteem for the strictness of their lives, place a great part of their own religion in condemning others;[a] but see to it, that you *do not judge* those about you, in this rigorous and severe manner, nor pass such unnecessary or uncharitable censures upon them, *that you may not* yourselves *be judged* with the like severity. 2 *For* in this respect you will find, that *according to the judgment with which you judge* others, *you shall be judged; and by that* very *measure* that *ye mete* to them, *it shall be measured back to you*: God and man will make great allowances to the character of the candid and benevolent; but they must expect "judgment without mercy, who have shewed no "mercy;" nor can they deny the equity of such treatment. (Jam. ii. 13.)

3 The caution I have mentioned is more apparently necessary, considering how prone men are to be partial to themselves: *but why dost thou*, whoever thou art, *look at* that little infirmity which is but like *a mote in thy brother's eye, while thou observest not the* much greater fault, which is like a *beam in thine own eye?*[b]

MAT. VII. 1.
JUDGE not, that ye be not judged.

2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

[a] *Place a great part of their own religion in condemning others.*] Though Christ does not so directly level his discourse against the Pharisees in this chapter, as in the two foregoing, he seems to glance upon them in this, and other expressions, which he uses in it. That they were very culpable on this head appears from such passages, as Luke xviii. 9—14; xvi. 14, 15; and John vii. 47—49. (Compare Isa. lxv. 5.) Their unjust censures of Christ are the strongest instances of it, that can be conceived.

[b] *Look at a mote in thy brother's eye, while thou observest not the beam in thine own eye.*] Dr. Lightfoot (Hor. Hebr. in loc.) has shewn, that this expression, as well as that in ver. 2, was a proverb among the Jews. The word κάρφος, which we render *mote*, is well explained by Hesychius, who tells us it signifies *a little splinter of wood*; (though others understand it of *a small seed*); and thus it is opposed to δοκὸν, a large *beam*, with great propriety. But as it is impossible, that such a thing as *a beam of wood* should be lodged in the eye, I am ready to imagine, that these words might signify different kinds of *distempers*, to which that tender part is subject; the former of which might be no more, in comparison of the latter, than a *grain*, or *splinter*, to *a beam*.

SECT. XLII. Mat. VII. 4.

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold a beam *is* in thine own eye?

Or how canst thou say to thy brother, with any appearance of justice, or any degree of assurance, *Hold still* [*and*] *I will take the mote out of thine eye*;[c] *while behold*, it is much more visible, that [*there is*] *a beam in thine own eye? Thou* partial *hypocrite*, begin thy reformation at home, and make it thy *first* care to *clear out the beam from thine own eye*, or to correct the errors of thy judgment and the enormities of thy life; *and then wilt thou* better *discern* [*how*] *to remove the mote out of thy brother's eye*, and mayest attempt it with more decency, as well as greater probability of success.

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine; lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

I would farther remind you, that how unexceptionable soever your own characters may be, there is some caution to be used in attempting to reprove, or even to inform others; or you may expose your admonitions to contempt, and yourselves to abuse. *Give not* that *holy* [*food*] *to dogs*, or to such profane, furious, and persecuting wretches as deserve no better a name; *nor cast your* precious *pearls* of heavenly wisdom *before* such profligate sensualists, as resemble *swine* rather than men; *lest*, as those brutal creatures might do if jewels were thrown before them, *they trample them under their feet* with scorn, *and turning* [*upon you*,] as if they had received an injury rather than a favour, fasten on you, and *tear you*:[d] for so extremely sordid and malignant will you find many in these degenerate days.

7 Ask, and it shall

Now, whether you want wisdom to guide you in these difficulties, or fortitude to animate

[c] *Hold still* [*and*] *I will take the mote out of thine eye.*] This seems to be the exact meaning of ἄφες ἐκβαλω, which I chose to translate thus literally, as I think it elegantly intimates, how ready men are to shrink back from reproof. The simile here used, implies that it is as absurd for a *bad man* to set up for a *reprover* of others, as it would be for one that is almost *blind* himself, to pretend to perform operations on other men's eyes.

[d] *And turning* [*upon you*] *tear you.*] I cannot blame the translation of 1727, which follows Castalio, and renders it *lest these* (that is, the swine) *trample them under foot, and those,* (that is, the dogs) *turn upon you and tear you.* This may perhaps be our Lord's meaning, but it did not seem necessary to alter the version, as it is possible that dogs might trample upon jewels, and swine might be ready to wound those that disturbed them.—That the figure here supposed is sometimes used, does indeed appear by comparing Mat. xii. 22; 1 Cor. xi. 11; 2 Cor. ii. 15; and Philem. ver. 5. But I think the order of the words as they stand in the original, may very well be retained in the translation of these places; for the transposition of words, even where there is a trajection in the sense, is so dangerous a thing where sacred writers are in question, that no small advantage gained in elegance or perspicuity seems sufficient to counterbalance it.

SECT. XLII.

you against such hardships; or, in a word whatever your exigencies or necessities may be, *ask* the divine assistance in prayer, *and it shall be given you; seek* it, *and you shall find* it; and if it be a while delayed, *knock* with repeated importunity at the door of mercy, *and it shall* at length *be* graciously *opened to you.* To this you are encouraged by the experience of every praying soul; *for, every one that asketh* aright, *receiveth: and he that* diligently *seeketh, findeth: and to him that* patiently *knocketh,* [*the door*] *shall be opened.*

Mat. VII. 7.

be given you: seek, and ye shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

8 For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

9 *And indeed*[e] it is no inconsiderable encouragement, which you may derive from that natural affection to your offspring, which a merciful God has infused into the hearts of those of you that are parents; for *what one man is there among you,*[f] in all this numerous assembly, *who,* 10 *if his son should ask him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he ask* him *for a fish, will give him a serpent?* Can you imagine any father could be so unnatural, as to deny the necessary supplies of life to his hungry child; and instead of these, to give him what would starve 11 or poison him? *if therefore you,* imperfect and *evil as you are,* and some of you perhaps tenacious, froward, and unkind, yet *know how to give good gifts to your children;* if you find your hearts disposed and ready to communicate the best of what you have for their relief and sustenance, *how much more will your* almighty and all-bountiful *Father in heaven,* who has a perfect sight of all your wants, and can with perfect ease supply them, and who himself has wrought into your hearts these benevolent af-

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

11 If ye then being evil, know *how* to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is

[e] *And indeed.*] Dr. Whithy thinks, that where the particle η is placed at the beginning of a sentence, it is intended merely for a mark of interrogation; and in this way it is, that he supposes, we are to understand it here, and likewise in Mat. xx. 15; and 1 Cor. xiv. 36. But as the sense will very fitly bear it, I conceive that in each of these places it may be rendered *indeed.*

[f] *What one man is there among you?*] This seems to be the emphasis of τις εστιν εξ υμων ανθρωπος: some think it also to imply the same, as if it had been said *Which of you is there, though but a man?* And as what is added in the eleventh verse plainly expresses this sense, perhaps it might also be intended here.—Young preachers will, I hope, observe how much life and force it adds to these discourses of our Lord, that they so closely are directed, through the whole of them, as an immediate address to his hearers; and are not loose and general harangues, in the manner of those essays, which are now grown so fashionable in pulpits. If any are grown too polite, to learn true oratory from Christ, I wish they would at least learn it from Demosthenes, who, I doubt not, would have admired the eloquence of this sermon.

in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

fections, be ready to exceed you in expressing his kindness, so as freely to *give good things to those that ask* them of *him* by fervent and constant prayer? SECT. XLII. Mat. VII. 12.

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law, and the prophets.

Being animated *therefore* by his goodness,[g] study to express your gratitude for it, by your integrity and kindness to your fellow creatures; and take it as a most sacred rule, *All things which ye would be willing that men should do to you, do ye also in like manner to them:* treat them in every instance, just as you would think it reasonable to be treated by them, if you were in their circumstances, and they in yours: *for this is*, in effect, a summary and abstract of all the human and social virtues recommended in the moral precepts of *the law and the prophets;* and it was one of the greatest ends of both,[h] to bring men to this equitable and amiable temper.

13 Enter ye in at

It will indeed be very difficult thus to overcome the prejudices of self-love, and to subdue those other corruptions of the heart which oppose themselves to the obedience of the divine laws; and the persecutions to which good men are often exposed, will increase the difficulty:[i] but I would press you to exert a becoming re- 13

[g] Being animated *therefore* by his goodness.] Some would have us to consider the particle ουν in this passage, as a mere expletive; but there is certainly a force in the connection, beyond what most have observed. See the excellent discourses of Bishop Atterbury and Dr. Evans upon it; which illustrate the sense, reasonableness, and use of this golden law, in a manner that deserves the most attentive perusal.

[h] One of the greatest ends of both.] I say *one of the greatest*, that this may be reconciled with our Lord's declaring the *love of God* to be *the first and great commandment;* (Mat. xxii. 38.) and it is indeed a most absurd and fatal error to imagine, that *the regulation of social life is the only end of religion.* I fear, many good-natured deists will perish, by taking this one principle for granted, and my heart is wounded with the sad apprehension of it.

[i] Persecutions—will increase the difficulty.] In order to reconcile what is here advanced, with those passages, which assert *Christ's yoke* to be *easy*, and *the ways of wisdom* to be *ways of pleasantness*, &c. a late learned writer thinks it necessary to suppose, that this text refers entirely to the case of persecution; and that the *strait gate* is a violent death, which lay at the end of the *narrow way*, and concluded the injuries and calamities which persecutors would bring upon Christians. (See Mr. Hallet's Disc. Vol. III. p. 24—29.) But nothing is more certain, than that Christ requires from all his disciples, in all ages and places, a life of *mortification* and *self-denial;* which, though it is mingled with, and introductory to pleasures abundantly sufficient to counterbalance it, yet to corrupt nature is difficult and painful; (see Mat. v. 29, 30; xvi. 24; Rom. vi. 6; viii. 13; Col. iii. 5; Gal. v. 16, 17; and 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27.) However, therefore, I allow that persecutions are to be included among other difficulties, yet I can see no reason to believe, that *martyrdom* was so common in the age of those to whom Christ addressed himself, as to be spoken of in such general language as *the gate leading to life:* not to insist upon it, that our Lord now speaks of what then *was*, and not what *would be* the case in future years; and that he mentions the gate before the way; whereas I think Mr. Hallet's inter-

SECT. XLII. Mat. VII. 13.

solution, and courageously to *enter in through the strait gate* of self-denial and holiness; *for wide is the gate, and* smooth and *spacious the way which leads to destruction; and there are many who enter* into destruction *by it:* And

14 this they do, *because* they are discouraged by the hardships which attend the entrance on a religious life, or must be expected in a progress in it; as they see that *strait is the gate, and rugged* and painful *the way which leads to* eternal *life: and they who find it,* and with a holy ardency and resolution press into it, so as to arrive at that blessed end, *are* comparatively *few:* see to it, therefore, that you be of that little number.

13 the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction; and many there be which go in thereat:

14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it.

15 And it concerns you so much the rather to be careful about it, as the falsehood of many, who set up for religious teachers, will in some degree increase the difficulty and danger. *Be* therefore *on your guard against* those *false prophets, who come to you* indeed *in the clothing of sheep,*[k] in the most specious forms of humility, innocence, and piety; *but inwardly are ravening wolves,* which seek nothing but to feed themselves by the destruction of the flock.

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16 And you will find, on a more accurate observation of their actions, that *you may* generally *know them by their fruits,*[l] and discover,

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits.

pretation would have required a different order.—When Grotius refers the *straitness of the gate,* to the difficulty of virtue in itself, and the *ruggedness of the way* to accidental oppositions, he seems to refine too much.—Many parallel passages from heathen writers may be seen in him and Dr. Whitby.

[k] *Who come to you in the clothing of sheep.*] It is a very low thought, to suppose that our Lord here refers to the *rough habit* worn by *false prophets* of old; for which purpose so many critics quote Zech. xiii. 4; and, very unaccountably, Heb. xi. 37. For, not to insist on the probability there is, that those *rough garments* might be made of *goats* or *camels hair,* rather than *wool,* (compare 2 Kings i. 8; and Mat. iii. 4.) the beauty of the simile is lost by this interpretation. A wolf in sheep's clothing, is grown into a proverb, for a wicked man that makes a great profession of religion, yet cannot dissemble so well, as not to be discovered by attentive observation; which was just the character of the Pharisees in our Saviour's days; see Mat. xxiii. 23—28; and Luke xi. 39—42.

[l] *You may know them by their fruits.*] The characters of men are not to be discovered by the doctrines that they teach; and therefore this cannot (as some have thought,) be the meaning of *knowing them,* who were their teachers *by their fruits.* It is more reasonable to explain it of their *actions,* which are often called *fruits;* (compare Mat. iii. 8; xxi. 43; John xv. 2, 5; and Col. i. 6.)—It will be objected, that *bad men* may teach *good doctrines,* and even the worst have been known to do it in some instances. But as to this, I answer, that our Lord does not exhort his disciples to reject whatever such men taught, but only to *be upon their guard against them,* that they might not credit any thing merely on their authority.—I only add, that this caution would, by a parity of reason, extend to all that set up for *teachers,* as well as to *prophets;* (not to insist on the latitude in which that

Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

through all their disguise, that base character which lurks beneath, and which may justly render you suspicious as to their doctrines: (2 Tim. iii. 5—9.) For *do men* look to *gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles?*[m] Or can it be expected by you, in a common way, that you should gather spiritual advantage, or should obtain religious improvement, from the lessons of wicked men? Their influence, on the whole, will be more likely to debauch, than edify your minds; for as the fruit will be agreeable in its nature and kind to the tree that produces it, *even so, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces bad fruit;* and in like manner, will the fruits that men produce be answerable to the habitual frame and disposition of their hearts. Nor can it indeed be otherwise in the usual course of things; for as *a good tree cannot bear evil fruit*, so *neither can a corrupt tree bear good fruit;* (compare Mat. xii. 33—35, sect. lxii.) And therefore, by the way, to prevent such false pretenders to religion from being a lasting incumbrance and mischief, they shall assuredly be overtaken by the righteous judgment of God: and as you see, that *every tree which*, after a competent trial, *beareth not good fruit*, how fair and flourishing soever it may seem, *is cut down, and cast into the fire;* such too will be the end of hypocritical professors, and ungodly men, which it becomes you all seriously to consider. Upon the whole, it will be found that there is now a difference in mens characters, correspondent to the great difference to be made in their future estate; *so that* I had reason to say, that *you shall* generally *know them by their fruits:* the disguise will fall off in an unguarded moment, and it will be your wisdom to observe and improve the signal.

SECT. XLII. Mat. VII. 16.

17 Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

17

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

18

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire.

19

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

20

word is used): so that it would at least obliquely glance on the Pharisees, whose influence over the people was so injurious to the gospel, and so exceeding mischievous to those who had a veneration for them, that our Lord found it necessary often to repeat such cautions. See Mat. xv. 12, 13; xvi. 6; xxiii. 2, *& seq.* Mark viii. 15; and Luke xii. 1.

[m] *Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles?*] These words suppose, the plant was *known*, to be a *thorn* or a *thistle*, and represent the folly of looking for *grapes* or *figs* from plants that had it not in their nature to bear them, or of expecting *good* from persons that were vicious and corrupt. Had Christ meant what has commonly been supposed, he would rather have said, *You do not find thorns on a vine, or thistles on a fig-tree.*

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. XLII. WHEN will the happy time come, in which *Christians* shall form themselves on these important *maxims* of their great *Master!* When shall they be known to be *his disciples*, by the *candour* of their sentiments, the *equity* of their conduct, and the *beneficence* of their actions, as well as by the *articles* of their *faith* and the *forms* of their *worship!* Let us all apply these charges to ourselves, in the dear and awful name of him that gave them.

Verse 1, 2 What can be more dreadful to us, than to think of being severely *judged* by that God, without whose hourly forbearance 3, 5 and gracious indulgence, we are all undone? Let us then exercise that *mercy* which we need; and to form our minds to this most reasonable temper, let us often be thinking of *our own* many *infirmities*, and be humbling ourselves before God on account of them.

7, 8 Animated by the gracious invitations and the precious promises which are here given, with earnest importunity let us make our daily *addresses* to his throne; *asking*, that we may *receive; seeking*, that we may *find;* and *knocking*, that the door of mercy may be *opened* to us. And while any of us feel in 9, 11 our hearts the workings of *parental tenderness* towards our infant offspring, let us consider it as a delightful emblem of yet greater *readiness* in our *heavenly Father*, to pity and relieve *his children.*

May universal righteousness and charity be practised by us in the whole of our behaviour, and may we *always exercise ourselves herein to have a conscience void of offence, both towards God and towards men!* (Acts xxiv. 16.) May we avoid all manner of injustice, and guard against the sallies of a proud and over-bearing temper! May we be upright and benevolent in all our conduct; and make it our constant care to govern our actions by 12 that most equitable *rule*, Of *doing to others, as we* would reasonably *desire they should do to us*, on a change of our circumstances and theirs! Happy those generous souls, in whom the bias of *self-love* is so rectified, that they can in this instance hold the *balance* between themselves and others, with an impartial and unwavering hand!

20 On the whole, let us remember, that we ourselves are at last to be tried by the rule, by which we are here directed to judge of others, even by *the fruits* which we produce. May God by 17, 18 his grace make the *tree good*, that the productions of it may be found to his glory and the refreshment of all around us, that we 19 may not be *cut down as cumberers of the ground, and cast into the fire!*

The *way of life*, which our blessed *Redeemer* has marked out

for us in such precepts as these, may indeed to corrupt nature appear *rugged* and *narrow*, and *the gate strait* through which we are to pass: but let us encourage ourselves against all these difficulties, by considering that immortal *life* and glory to which they infallibly *lead*. Then shall we, doubtless, prefer the most *painful way* of piety and virtue, though with yet *fewer companions* than we might reasonably expect, to all those *flowery* and *frequented paths* of vice, which *go down to the chambers of death*. SECT. XLII. Verse 13

SECT. XLIII.

Our Lord concludes his sermon on the mount with a lively representation of the absolute necessity of a practical regard to his precepts. Mat. VII. 21, *to the end.*

MAT. VII. 21.

MAT. VII. 21. NOT every one that sayeth unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

THESE are the precepts I thought proper to give you; and you must govern your lives by them, if ever you hope to find your account in the most diligent attendance on my ministry: for it is *not every one who saith unto me, Lord, Lord*, who is ready now in words to acknowledge me as his Master, or who at last with the most passionate and earnest cries entreats my mercy, that *shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*,[a] and be admitted to the complete felicity in which the administration I am now opening shall finally terminate, *but he* only shall be entitled to that privilege, *who* conscientiously *performs* in the main series of his life, *the* holy *will of my Father who is in heaven.* SECT. XLIII. Mat. VII. 21.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we

It will be your wisdom to attend to these things; for though you now see me in what may seem a mean and despicable form, the time will certainly come, when I shall appear as the Universal Judge: and I now forewarn you, that *many will say to me in that day*, when their eternal state is to be determined, *Lord, Lord, have we not* been employed in distinguished offices in thy church, and been furnished for them even by 22

[a] *Shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.*] Here *the kingdom of heaven* must signify, that *of glory* above; for calling Christ, *Lord*, is the very circumstance which constitutes us the subjects of his earthly kingdom, or members of his visible church. Compare Mat. viii. 11; Luke xiii. 28; and 1 Cor. xv. 50.

SECT. XLIII.

miraculous endowments? and in pursuance of them, have we not taught and *prophesied in thy name? and in* the authority of *thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name have done many* 23 *wonderful works? And* nevertheless, *I will then* openly *declare unto them, I never knew you*, or never approved of your character,[b] even when you made the most florid profession;[c] and therefore *depart from me, ye workers of iniquity:*[d] and whatever you that hear me may now imagine, that separation from me will be their everlasting destruction

Mat. VII. 22.

not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24 Hear *therefore* the conclusion of the whole matter, and seriously attend to it. *Every one*, whoever he be, and how great soever his former irregularities may have been, *who heareth these my words, and doeth them;* or in the main course of his life governs his temper and his actions by them, lays a solid foundation for present comfort, and everlasting security and joy: *I will compare him* therefore *to a prudent man, who built his* 25 *house upon a* firm *rock; And the* stormy *rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat* with violence *upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded on a* solid *rock*. And thus shall the good man's hopes be established, when they come, as all must 26 come, to the strictest trial. *But every one that heareth these my sayings, and doeth them not*, how constantly soever he may attend them, and whatever zeal he may profess for them, *may* justly *be compared to a foolish man, who*, without any care to secure the foundation, *built his house* 27 *upon the sand; And the* stormy *rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew* with a tempestuous violence, *and struck* directly *on that house; and it fell* at once, *and its ruin was great* and wide, as the building had been: a lively emblem of the ruin which will

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock;

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand;

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell, and great was the fall of it.

[b] *I never knew you*, or never approved of your character.] The word *know* is plainly used in this sense, Psal. i. 6; Mat. xxv. 12; 2 Tim. ii. 19; John x. 14; Rom. vii. 15; and perhaps 1 Cor. viii. 3.

[c] Even when you made the most florid profession.] This is a very remarkable circumstance, that is strongly implied in the words *I NEVER knew you.*

[d] *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.*] There is an incomparable dignity in this whole passage, which I have endeavoured a little to illustrate in the paraphrase. The poor despised Jesus, not only calls God *his Father*, but speaks as the *Eternal Judge*, before whom men should beg and plead for their very lives, dreading banishment from him as their final destruction.

another day overwhelm the unhappy man, who trusts to an outward profession and form of godliness, when he does not sincerely and practically regard it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine.

29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

28 *And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these* excellent *sayings,*[e] *the multitudes* that heard him *were struck with amazement at his doctrine. For* in this, and his other sermons, *he was* still *teaching them*[f] *as one that had a* divine *authority* to dictate in his own name, *and not as the scribes,* their established teachers; who generally contented themselves, with quoting the name and authority of some celebrated doctors of the former age, and that frequently to confirm some trifling remark or useless ceremony of human device;[g] whereas the discourses of Christ were weighty and convincing, and always delivered with an air of seriousness, dignity, and majesty, becoming the great Prophet and King of his church, and the immediate delegate from God to men.

28 29

IMPROVEMENT.

How justly may *our admiration* concur with *theirs* that heard *these sayings of our Lord,* while we have the honour and pleasure of attending these discourses as the inspired penmen have recorded them, by the assistance of that *Spirit,* who was to *bring all things to their remembrance!* Are we not struck with the *authority* of this *Divine Teacher,* so as to *bear our witness* to the *gracious* and edifying *words that proceeded out of his mouth?* (Luke iv. 22.)

Verse 28

Let us not content ourselves with applauding what we have

24—27.

[e] *When Jesus had finished these* excellent *sayings.*] This plainly intimates that all this discourse was delivered at once, and consequently, that several passages related by Luke, as spoken at different times, are *repetitions* of it; compare Mat. v. 3, *&c. seq.* with Luke vi. 20, *&c. seq.*—Mat. v 13. with Luke xiv. 34. 35.—Mat. v. 25; with Luke xii. 58.—Mat. vi. 9, *&c. seq.* with Luke xi. 2, *&c. seq.*—Mat. vi. 20, 21; Luke xii. 33, 34.—Mat. vi. 24. with Luke xvi. 13—Mat. vii. 1, *&c. seq.* with Luke vi. 37, *&c. seq.*—and Mat. vii. 12—14, with Luke xiii. 24.

[f] *He was still teaching them.*] Beza has well observed, that these words ην διδασκων refer to the continued course, and general character of his *teaching*, of which this discourse is a noble specimen; indeed so glorious a one, that I persuade myself the reader will pardon my having paraphrased it in so copious a manner.

[g] To confirm some trifling remark, or useless ceremony of human device.] If we may judge of the teachings of the scribes in Christ's days, by the Jewish Talmuds, or even by their Mishnah, this was so eminently the character of it, that nothing could be more justly contemptible; and their frigid and insipid comments and lessons could no more be compared with those strains of divine eloquence, with which our Lord's discourses abounded, than a glow-worm can be compared to the sun.

SECT. XLIII. heard, but let us go away and practise it. Shortly will that *stormy day* arise, which must try the *foundation* of our hopes. *God will lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet; and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding-place.* How thankful should we be, that *God has laid in Zion for a foundation, a chief Corner-stone, elect and precious;* with an assurance, that *he that believeth on him shall not be confounded!* (Compare Isa. xxviii. 16, & *seq.* and 1 Peter ii. 6.) *But let every man take heed how he builds thereupon;* lest the weight of his ruin be proportionable to the height of his hopes. (1 Cor. iii. 10.)

Verse 21, 22, 23 We *say unto Christ, Lord, Lord;* but let us remember this will not secure our *entering into his heavenly kingdom.* Whatever be our *profession*, or whatever our *office* in his church, the most splendid and honourable of *our works* will be vain, if we are found *workers of iniquity*; for our *great Master* will then *disown us*, as those whom he has *never approved.* Blessed *Jesus!* it will then be in vain to fly to thee with the importunity of prayer, and to repeat the most earnest addresses. We would now, while yet there is room for it, fall down before thee, entreating thee to add the *teachings* of thy *Spirit* to those of thy *word*, that we may be effectually engaged to *do the will of thine heavenly Father*, that we may finally be *confessed* and owned by thee, and be admitted *into the joy of our Lord!*

SECT. XLIV.

Jesus descending from the mount, cleanses a leper who applied to him for a cure. Mat. VIII. 1—4, Luke V. 12—16; Mark I. 40, *to the end.*

MAT. VIII. 1.

SECT. XLIV. Mat. VIII. 1. NOW when Jesus had finished this large and excellent discourse, *as he was coming down from the mountain*[a] on which he delivered it, *great multitudes* of people, impressed and charmed with what they had already heard, *followed him* to the town towards which he went, in hopes of farther instruction and edification.

MAT. VIII. 1 WHEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

[a] *As he was coming down from the mountain.*] I think this a sufficient warrant for fixing this story where we introduce it; though it be contrary to the order in which many learned men have placed it. Neither Mark nor Luke are, in this respect, by any means so express in the connection of it. Yet an attentive reader will observe, that I have not in this instance transposed either of them. The erroneous opinion that Luke vi. contained the *sermon on the mount*, and fixed it to an *order* different from Matthew's, is that, by which so many have been led into a mistake here.

SECT. XLIV.

Luke V. 12. And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold a man full of leprosy; who seeing Jesus, [Mar. came to him, beseeching him; and kneeling down to him,] fell on *his* face, [Mat. and worshipped him;] saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. [Mat. VIII. 2. Mark I. 40.]

And when he was just *in* the confines of a *certain city*,[b] in the neighbourhood of that mountain, *behold, a man full of leprosy*, and dreadfully overrun with that sad disease, *seeing Jesus*, and having been informed of the many miraculous cures which he had done, *came to him*, most earnestly *entreating him* to have pity on his wretched case; *and*, first *kneeling down to him*, he then *fell prostrate* before him, *and worshipped him, saying*, *Lord*, though my distemper be to human power incurable, (2 Kings v. 7.) yet I know assuredly that, *if thou wilt, thou canst cleanse me* from it.

Luke V. 12.

Mark I. 41. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will, be thou clean. [Mat. VIII. 3. Luke V. 13.—]

And Jesus, pleased with so strong a degree of faith, performed the cure, and did it also in the most condescending manner; for, *being moved with compassion* at so melancholy a sight, he took him aside from the multitude,[c] and *stretched out his hand, and touched him, saying unto him, I will* that thy petition be granted, and from this moment therefore *be thou clean*. *And* the almighty power of his commanding word *immediately* took place, and *as soon as he had spoken, the leprosy departed from him; and* it appeared by the alteration of his countenance, that *he was* entirely *cleansed* from that loathsome and inveterate disease.

Mark I. 41.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed. [Mat VIII. 3.—Luke V. 13.—]

42

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

And Jesus had no sooner wrought this miracle, but *having strictly charged him* not to divulge the matter,[d] *he dispatched him presently*

43

[b] *In a certain city*: εν μια των πολεων.] As Luke expresses it thus I am apt to think it was not Capernaum, which Luke had so often named before; and consequently, that the mountain on which Christ's sermon was delivered, lay at some distance from thence; whereas the plain on which some of it was repeated, was contiguous to Capernaum, into which, as Luke says, he entered at the close of it; (see Luke vii. 1. sect. lv; and compare note [b] on Mat. v. 1 p. 208.) —I speak of *the confines of this city*, whatever it was; because *lepers* were not allowed to live in towns. Compare Numb. v. 2. 2 Kings vii. 3; 2 Chron. xxvi. 21; and Luke xvii. 12.

[c] *He took him aside from the multitude.*] Else I think there could have been no room for *the charge of secrecy* given below; and the supposition of *such a circumstance*, which certainly happened in another cure, (compare Mark viii. 23; sect. lxxxviii.) will be a sufficient answer to the objections which Mr. Whiston has urged against following the order of St. Matthew here. See his Harmony, p. 107, and Jones's Vindication, p. 112—121.

[d] *Having strictly charged him* not to divulge the matter.] Some have supposed that εμβριμησαμενος αυτω implies that *Christ reproved him sharply* for the sin for which he had been visited with this disease, and *threatened him* with the fatal consequence of it if he returned to sin again: and in this case, the probability of what we have supposed is strengthened, that this was spoken to him *in private*, and was delivered in the same manner as the like caution was which Christ afterwards gave to the impotent man.

SECT. XLIV.

away: Saying unto him, as he departed from him, *See* that at present *thou say nothing unto any one,* of my having performed this cure;[e] *but* make it thy first business to *go* directly to Jerusalem, and there *shew thyself to the priest,* whose office it is legally to pronounce thee clean; *and offer the gift* of birds and lambs, [*and*] all *those things which Moses has commanded for thy purification;* (Lev. xiv. 1—32.) that it may be *for a testimony to them,* that the cure is really perfected; and that, if I should ever be heard of as the author of it, they may see my regard even to the ceremonial precepts of the law. *But* such was the impression that was made upon the leper by so great an instance of divine mercy to him, and he was so transported with joy at his miraculous deliverance, that *he went out* into the neighbouring country, *and began to publish it much, and to proclaim the matter* wherever he came.

Mark I. 44.

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things. [Mat. the gift,] which Moses commanded for a testimony unto them. [Mat. VIII. 4. Luke V. 14.]

45

45 But he went out, and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter.—

Luke V. 15.

And the more Jesus avoided the ostentation of such works, *so much the more there went a fame of him abroad* through all the country; *and great multitudes from all parts came together to him, to hear* him preach the gospel, *and to be healed of their infirmities by him.*

Luke V. 15. [And] so much the more there went a fame abroad of him; and great multitudes came together [to him from every quarter,] to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. [Mark I. 45.]

Mark I. 45.

And after some interval of time, the resort to him was *so* great, *that he could no longer openly enter into the city,* without drawing a multitude of attendants after him, *but was* obliged for a while to be chiefly *without in desert places.*

Luke V. 16.

And, to avoid the interruptions of the crowd,

Mark I. 45—Insomuch, that *Jesus* could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places.—

Luke V. 16.] And

(Compare John v. 14. sect. xlvi.) But as the word is generally used to signify *the giving of a strict injunction,* or *a solemn charge,* (as Phavorinus, Suidas, and Hesychius, have explained it,) I rather chuse to understand it of *the strict charge* that Christ gave to the *leper* not to divulge the manner of his cure, which is expressly mentioned in the following verse; and in which sense it is evident that the same word is used, Mat. ix. 30, sect. lxxii; where the same charge is given to the two blind men that Christ restored to sight.

[e] *See thou say nothing unto any one* of my having performed this cure.] Christ probably designed by this, not only to avoid the shew of any ostentation of his miraculous power, but to prevent the malice of the priests; who might have been unwilling to pronounce this leper clean, and have been ready to deny the cure, if they were told that he was healed by one they were so strongly prejudiced against; or might perhaps have censured Christ as having usurped an office that belonged to them, and taken upon him to *pronounce a leprous person clean.* Christ therefore would not have him to make known the circumstances of his cure to any, till he had first of all been with the priest; and, upon this account, *dispatched him presently away,* or *sent him off in haste,* that he might reach Jerusalem before the *priests* had any information of this miracle; as seems to be implied in the force of those words in ver. 43, ευθεως εξεβαλεν αυτον. See Grotius on Mat. viii. 4, and Lightfoot's Harmony, in loc.

he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

he frequently *withdrew into the wilderness, and prayed;* chusing in these circumstances, to spend some time in more than ordinary devotion, that he might engage a blessing on the truths he had so largely delivered, and obtain that success, which this eagerness of the people seemed to promise to his gospel. SECT. XLIV. Luke V. 16.

IMPROVEMENT.

OUR souls are overspread with the *leprosy of sin:* and where should we apply for help, but to the healing power and recovering grace, of the great *Redeemer!* Be the malady ever so deep, spreading, or inveterate, we may surely adopt the words of *the leper* before us, and say, *Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.* And how much reason have we to hope, his compassion will be moved in our favour, and his power exerted in our cure! Luke v. 12.

If we have received that favour, we are under the obligation of *no command* to *conceal it.* It is, on the contrary, our duty most gratefully to *publish it abroad,* for the honour of our Benefactor, and the advantage of those, who may be encouraged to make the same application, in humble hope of the same success. Mark i. 43, 44.

But when will the happy time come, that men shall be as solicitous about their *spiritual welfare,* as about the *health* of this *mortal body!* Almighty *Physician!* exert thine energy in this instance, as a token of farther favours! Convince men of their pollution and danger, and bow their stubborn knee, that it may bend in submissive and importunate supplication.

Let the *compassionate air* with which this cure was wrought, be considered by all *spiritual physicians,* as a lesson of condescension and tenderness; and let the *modesty* with which it was conducted, engage us to avoid every appearance of ostentation and vain glory. Mark i. 41.

To conclude; since *Christ* himself found it proper to *retire into a desert place to pray,* when crowds of admirers were flocking in upon him, let it teach those who are engaged in the scenes of *public business,* and fill them up with the greatest applause, yet resolutely to command some *seasons* for *retirement;* as remembering, that the more various and important our *public labours* are, the more evidently do we need to draw down succour by ardent *prayer,* that we may be strengthened and prospered in them. Luke v. 16.

SECT. XLV.

Christ returning to Capernaum heals a man quite disabled by the palsy; vindicates his power of forgiving sins; and calls Matthew the publican to attend him. MARK II. 1—14; Luke V. 17—28; Mat. IX. 2—9.

MARK II. 1.

SECT. XLV.

Mark II. 1.

AND after Jesus had spent [*some*] *days*[a] in devout retirement, *he* appeared *again* in public, and *entered into Capernaum; and it was* quickly taken notice of, and great numbers of people soon *heard that he was in the house* where he formerly dwelt; and as he had been some time abroad, and greatly increased his reputation both by his miracles and preaching, they flocked around him with the greatest eagerness.

Luke V. 17.

And it happened on a certain day, while he continued here, that, as he *was teaching* the people, [*several*] of the *Pharisees and doctors of the law were sitting by; who were come out of every town of Galilee, and* even *of Judea, and* particularly [*from*] *Jerusalem*;[b] and by appoint-

MARK II. 1.

AND again he entered into Capernaum, after *some* days, and it was noised that he was in the house.

LUKE V. 17. And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the

[a] *And after* Jesus had spent *some days.*] Matthew has recorded so many events *between* the cure of the *leper* and the *paralytic*, that I should not have connected them, had not Mark so expressly asserted, that some of those events, especially *the dispossession of the legion*, happened *long after*, (see Mark iv. 35; note [s], sect. lxix. and Mark v. 1, sect. lxx.) and Luke strongly intimates the same concerning the other story of *the centurion's servant.* (See Luke vii. 1, 2. & *seq.* sect. lv.) Now I think the honour of the new Testament requires—that when *one of the evangelists* does expressly assert the *order* in which he places facts in question, and the *other* does not so expressly assert it (which is the case with Matthew here) the *order* of the *latter*, though an apostle and eye-witness, should be changed out of regard to the *former*. As likewise—that if *none of the three* assert their *order*, that in which *any two* agree to place a fact in question, should be chosen rather than that of *the third*. And on these two *rules* I have proceeded in many instances.—But that the *order* of Matthew should be changed for that of Luke, when neither of them *assert* any thing concerning *that order*, is what I think no interpretation from Luke i. 3, can justify. (See note [s] on that text, p. 22.) Much less can it be allowable expressly to contradict Matthew, for the sake of keeping to the *order* of Luke; which yet most *harmonizers* seem to have done, even when he was relating what passed in his own house and presence. (See note [a] on Mat. ix. 18, § lxxii.) Could I have persuaded myself to take such liberties with any of the sacred writers, I should not have doubted to follow Matthew and John in *their order* universally, as Sir Isaac Newton doth, and to transpose Mark and Luke wherever they disagree with either of them; for I cannot observe that *those two* do in any instance disagree with each other in any of the facts in question.—As to the story of the *paralytic* here before us, Mark strongly connects it with that of the *leper*, as happening *some days after it*; though Matthew does not mention it till the *next chapter*, and places several events between them; while Luke, according to his frequent custom, mentions it only as happening *on a certain day*. This therefore seems to be the proper place to introduce it, and Matthew's order may be changed for the reasons given above.

[b] *From Jerusalem.*] If this happened, as most commentators suppose, a little

power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.

ment met here to attend his doctrine and observe his miracles; at which the governors of the Jewish church began now to be greatly alarmed. But notwithstanding the malicious views with which they came, Jesus went on as usual in his work, *and the* miraculous *power of the Lord was* [*present*] *to heal them*,[c] who then applied to him for the cure of their diseases. SECT. XLV. Luke V. 17.

MARK II. 2. And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

And immediately so many of the neighbouring inhabitants *were assembled, that there was not room to receive* [*them*] in the house, or *even about the door;* so desirous were they to hear how Jesus would acquit himself, in the presence of such curious, critical, and prejudiced inquirers, as those that were then sitting around him. *And he preached the word* of the gospel *to them*, with his usual plainness, seriousness, and authority, and confirmed it by various miracles. Mark II. 2.

3 And [behold,] they come unto him, bringing [a man] sick of the palsy, which [lying on a bed] was borne of four: [LUKE, and] they sought means to bring him in and to lay *him* before him.] [MAT. IX. 2. LUKE V. 18.]

And behold, among many others in most deplorable circumstances who were cured by him, *they came unto him, bringing a man seized with the palsy*, and quite disabled by it, so that he was obliged, in order to his being presented to Jesus, to be *laid on a bed*, or couch, *and carried by four* men. *And they endeavoured to bring him in and lay him* down *before him*, hoping that so melancholy a sight would affect his compassionate temper, and engage his assistance. 3

LUKE V. 19. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in, [and could not

And when they could not find any way to bring him in, and could not so much as *come near* enough to speak to Jesus, *because of the crowd*, Luke V. 19.

before *Christ's second passover*, (John v. i.) some of these might be sent from the *sanhedrim* with a view of gaining some information concerning Jesus, to guide their resolves concerning him at the *ensuing feast*, in which they *persecuted him, and sought to slay him*, John v. 16. It is very probable, that the scribes at Jerusalem, hearing how expressly he had attacked their interpretation of the law, some days before, in his celebrated sermon on the mount, (which, so far as we can learn, was the first time he did it,) might summon their brethren in the neighbouring country, to meet them at Capernaum, in order to attend on the next of Christ's public discourses, wherever it might happen to be.

[c] *The power of the Lord was present to heal them.*] According to the common method of construction, this may seem to intimate, that the *healing power of Christ* was exerted on *some of the Pharisees*; but as they came from distant parts to attend Christ as *spies*, it is not probable, they were *diseased* persons; or that, if any of them being advanced in years might labour under *some infirmities*, they were so *great* and *visible* that a cure would be immediately remarked; and least of all can we suppose, they had *that faith in Christ* which he required in those, whom he intended to heal; (see Mark vi. 5; and compare John vii. 48.) It is more reasonable therefore to conclude, on all these accounts that this is *one* of those few places, where the relative *them* is referred to a *remoter antecedent*, than that which is immediately before it. Compare in the *original*, Mat. xi. 1; xii. 9, Luke v. 30, John viii. 44; Acts. viii. 26; and Heb. xii. 17. See Gloss. Philolog. Sacr. p. 513—515.

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and feared a delay might lose so precious an opportunity, they carried him round to a back passage by which *they went up to the top of the house,* (compare Mark xiii. 15.) which, according to the Jewish custom, was made flat; (Deut. xxii. 8.) *and uncovered the roof* of the apartment *where* [*Jesus*] *was,* (which was a room that had no chamber over it), opening a way into the house by lifting up a kind of lattice or trap-door; (compare 2 Kings i. 2.) *and when they had pulled* [*it*] *up,* or had removed the frame of it to make the passage wider,[d] *they let down* [*the paralytic,*] *with his couch, through the tiles,* with which the other part of the roof was paved, *into the midst*[e] of the company assembled, and so laid him *before Jesus. And Jesus seeing their faith,* and graciously excusing the inconveniencies into which their affection had transported them, *said to the man that had the palsy, Take courage, son,*[f] for *thy sins are forgiven.*

Luke V. 19.

Mat. IX. 2.

come nigh] because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top and [uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they] let him down through the tiling with *his* couch, into the midst before Jesus. [MARK II. 4.]

MAT. IX. 2. And Jesus seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. [MARK II. 5. LUK. V. 20.]

[d] *When they had pulled it up,* or had removed the frame, &c.] Ἐξορύξαντες, which we render *broken up,* plainly signifies *pulling out,* (Gal. iv. 15.) And no man in his senses can suppose the evangelist meant to say, that they *tore up the beams* and rafters of the house upon this occasion; and yet this has been made the foundation of great objections against this story. We have a right to suppose this *removal of the frame* was done *with care:* because the circumstances plainly require such *care,* and common sense would suggest it. Woolston's perverse attack on this miracle, is as plausible, as any thing he has written against Christianity; but I have endeavoured in as few words as possible, to suggest an answer to the chief of his objections; and it may be considered as a specimen of the manner in which I shall proceed in other cases of the like nature: for it would be very improper to enter on the controversy at large here, especially after all the convincing and unanswerable treatises, which have lately been written in defence of the evangelists; among which I apprehend none more valuable, than that called The Miracles of Christ Vindicated, in four parts; to which I with great pleasure refer for a larger account of this story, and the others handled by the excellent author of it.

[e] *They let down the paralytic—into the midst.*] What is suggested in the paraphrase is the most probable account of the matter, if we suppose *our* word to have been in any *covered room* of the house. But Dr. Shaw's hypothesis, which goes on principles which were quite unknown to me till I had the pleasure (since the first edition of this work) of reading his excellent Travels, seems to me yet more natural. From considering what is now the form of the houses in Barbary and the Levant, he supposes that τὸ μέσον signifies the *court yard,* round about which the house was built; and that our Lord was there. He thinks that, crowded as this area was, the bearers of the paralytic might get in at the gateway, (where perhaps Christ could neither be seen nor heard, and might carry him up *the stairs,* which commonly go up from thence; and being got to the *flat roof,* might take down inwards a part of the *balustrade* or *parapet wall,* and so *let down the bed* with cords by the side of the glazed and perhaps painted *tiles,* which might beautify the walls of the house towards *the court.* Many of his quotations from the ancients do, in a very agreeable manner, at once illustrate this account, and receive new light from it. See Dr. Shaw's Travels, p. 373—380.

[f] *Take courage, son.*] Few can need to be told, that *son* is a title of condescension and tenderness by which superiors addressed inferiors, that were not pr-

SECT. XLV.

Mark II. 6.

given thee; and in token of it, I assure thee thy distemper shall be removed.

MARK II. 6. But [behold,] there were certain of the scribes [LUKE, and the Pharisees] sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts [*they* said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.—[MAT. IX. 3. LUKE V. 21.]

But behold, such was the perverseness of *some of the scribes and Pharisees* who *were* then *sitting there*, that on his saying to the man in such an absolute and sovereign way, Thy sins are forgiven thee, they took offence at the expression; *and reasoning in their hearts* upon it, *they said within themselves*, maliciously reflecting on him, *This man* most certainly *blasphemeth: Who is this*, that pretends to such an authority? [*and*] *why does this* arrogant *man thus* allow himself to *speak* such *blasphemies* as these? Such a speech as this surely deserves the name; for *who can* undertake to *forgive sins, but God alone*, the awful Majesty of heaven, who is affronted and dishonoured by committing them?

7 [Who is this] Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God only? [LUKE V. 21.]

8 And immediately, when Jesus [knowing their thoughts] perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things [Wherefore think ye evil] in your hearts? [MAT. IX. 4. LUKE V. 22.

And immediately, when Jesus, who perfectly well *knew* the secret workings of *their thoughts, perceived in his* own *mind that they reasoned thus in themselves*, though they did not openly declare their dissatisfaction and censure, *he said to them, Why do you reason thus in your hearts*, and so maliciously reflect upon me? [*and*] *wherefore do you think* [*such*] *evil things* of what I have now been saying? I shall be at no loss to vindicate the reasonableness of it; for *which is easier, to say to this paralytic, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say* to him, *Arise, and take up thy couch, and walk* away with it? May it not justly be concluded, that if I have a power efficaciously to say the one, I may without any usurpation say the other likewise; and declare the sin forgiven, when I can thus miraculously remove the punishment of it? *But that you may know* the case I put is not a vain presumptuous boast, but *that the Son of man* here *on earth*, though appearing in so humble and obscure a form, *has* yet a divine *authority to forgive* mens *sins*, (*he* turns about, and *says to the paralytic*,) O man, *I say unto thee, Arise*, immediately;

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? [MAT. IX. 5. LUKE V. 23.

10 But that ye may know, that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) [MAT. IX. 6. LUKE V. 24.]

11 I say unto thee,

Mark II. 6.

7

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9

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11

perly *their children*; (compare Josh. vii. 19; Eccles. xii. 12; and 2 Tim. ii. 1.) as *father* was a correspondent title of respect. (Compare 2 Kings v. 13; vi. 21; xiii. 14.) Yet it seems probable, from the use of it here, that the patient was a *young man*, considering that Christ himself was but a little above *thirty*; and if it were so, it made the case the more pitiable. Luke uses the word *man* on the occasion; and Christ might possibly use both; as the Apostle joins men and fathers, Acts vii. 2. and men and brethren, or, literally, men, brethren, Acts i. 16; ii. 29; xv. 7—13; xxiii. 1; and xxviii. 17.

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and to shew thou art perfectly healed at once, *take up thy couch* on which thou liest, *and*, bearing it on thy shoulders, *go thy way to thine own house*, for at this instant I will enable thee to do it

Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house. [MAT. IX. 6. LUKE V. 24.]

Mark II. 11.

Luke V. 25.

And immediately he was so strengthened by a secret power which went along with the word, that, believing the virtue and efficacy of it, *he rose up before them all; and taking up the couch on which he lay*, though before he was utterly weak and helpless, *he went forth*, vigorous and cheerful, *to his own house*, humbly *glorifying* and adoring *God* for that extraordinary cure which he had now received.

LUKE V. 25. And immediately he rose up before them [all] and took up [the bed] whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God [MARK II. 12.—MAT. IX. 7.]

26 *And when the multitude saw* [*it*,] *they were all amazed, and* with united acclamations *glorified God, who had given such* mighty and beneficent *power to men*, and raised up so eminent a Prophet to his people. *And they were filled with* such a reverential kind of *fear* and dread, under the apprehension of so marvellous a proof of the divine presence among them, that they could not forbear *saying* one to another, *We have* indeed *seen* most extraordinary *strange things to-day:* and after all the wonders we have known, *We never* before *saw any thing like it*, nor have we heard of any such event as this in the days of our fathers.

26 And [MAT. when the multitude saw *it*,] they were all amazed: and they glorified God [MAT. which had given such power unto men;] and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day; [We never saw it on this fashion.] [MARK II. 12. MAT. IX. 8.]

Mark II. 13.

And when the evening advanced, and the day grew cooler, *he went forth again by the sea-shore; and all the multitude* who had before attended in, or about the house, and many more who could not get near enough to see and hear what passed there, *resorted to him; and he* cheerfully went on with his work, and *taught them* here, after all the former labours of the day.

MARK II. 13. And he went forth again by the sea-*side*, and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

Mat. IX. 9.

And after these things, as Jesus passed out from thence, (that is, from the house in which the paralytic had been cured,) and was going down to the sea-side, *he saw a man*, (who was indeed *a publican*,[g] that collected the customs there,) *whose name was Matthew*, [*or*,] as he

MAT. IX. 9. And [LUKE, after these things,] as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man [LUKE, a publican,] named Matthew, [*or* Levi

[g] *A publican.*] This was a very *odious name* among the Jews, and their employment was attended with so much corruption and temptation, that there were few among them that were honest men; but they were generally persons of so infamous and vile a character, that *publicans* and *sinners* are often joined together as synonimous terms. (Mat. ix. 11; xi. 19; and elsewhere.) See the paraphrase on Luke iii. 12. p. 105.

the son of Alpheus, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose [LUKE, and left all,] and followed him. [MARK II. 14. LUKE V. 27, 28.]

was otherwise called *Levi, the son of Alpheus,* the brother of James; (compare Mark iii. 18; Luke vi. 15; Acts i. 13. and he was then *sitting at the custom-house:*[h] *and* calling him to be one of his disciples, *he said unto him, Follow me. And* immediately consigning his books and cash to some careful hand, *he arose, and left all* the care and profits of his employment, *and followed him,* with most grateful acknowledgments of his condescension, in admitting a person of his station of life, into the number of his stated attendants. SECT. XLV. Mat. IX. 9.

IMPROVEMENT.

It is a pleasure to reflect upon it, that *Christ* was attended by such vast numbers of people, and that they who were *teachers* of others, should themselves sit down to hear him. But it is melancholy to reflect on the perverse purposes, with which many of them came; and how few did, on the whole, *receive his word into their hearts,* so as to *bring forth fruit unto perfection.* Curiosity led some, and interest others; and some came to find occasion of *hurting him,* whose whole business in life was to *do good.* Yet these low, these vile purposes did not prevent *his preaching,* and *working miracles before them,* and being ready to exert his *power* for their benefit. Thus courageous and resolute let us be in the discharge of our duty; thus solicitous, that we may not *be overcome of evil,* but may (which, on the whole, is always in some degree practicable,) *overcome evil with good.* (Rom. xii. 21.) Luke V. 17. Mark II. 2. & seq.

How industrious were the attendants and friends of this poor *paralytic,* to obtain a cure for him! What contrivance, what labour did they use, to find a proper opportunity to *bring him in,* and *lay him before Jesus!* Ought we not to be as tender and zealous, in all the offices of the truest friendship; and to imitate, so far as suits the difference of circumstances, their importunate application, and their lively *faith?* Luke V. 19.

Theirs had its praise, and its reward. *Our Lord* said to this distempered person, *Thy sins are forgiven thee.* He *pardoned all his iniquities,* while he *healed all his diseases.* (Psal. ciii. 3.) This was a blessing, that would render the cure yet incomparably more valuable; and this reviving declaration had *the Son of God* a *power* to add, and to pronounce. The *scribes* and *Pharisees,* ignorant and prejudiced as they were, considered such a declaration as *blasphemy.* Their *principle* indeed was right, that *God alone has power to forgive sins,* and it is impious for men to Mat. IX. 2. Mark II. 6, 7.

[h] *At the custom-house.*] So τελωνιον properly signifies. Some have rendered it *tollbooth*; and I should have followed them, had I not apprehended that the word might have suggested some modern idea, for which there is in the original no foundation.

SECT. XLV. claim it; but their *application* was evidently wrong. The *miraculous effect* plainly shewed the divine *authority* of the blessed *Jesus*. And he has still *the key of David: he openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth*, (Rev. iii. 7.) Almighty Saviour, may we each of us receive from thee *forgiveness of our sins*; and we will not complain, though *our sicknesses* should not immediately be removed! Let us *glorify God*, who has *given this power to his Son*; and thankfully acknowledge, that we are ourselves, in many respects, the monuments both of his *pardoning* and *healing* mercy.

Ver. 10, 11, 12.

Luke V. 26.

To conclude; let us view with humble wonder and pleasure, this farther instance of the condescension and grace of the *Redeemer*, in the *call of Matthew:* his *condescension* in calling to so near an attendance, and so intimate a friendship, a man who was *a publican*, infamous as that employment was; and his *grace*, which could immediately inspire him with so firm a resolution of *quitting all* the profits of it, that he might reduce himself to circumstances of life, as precarious as those of his Divine Master. Many, no doubt, censured him as a rash *enthusiast*, or a *lunatic*, rather than a *sober convert;* but he is even now reaping the abundant *reward;* his loss is gain, and his contempt glory.

Mat. IX. 9.

SECT. XLVI.

Christ goes up to a feast at Jerusalem, (generally supposed to be his second passover,) and there cures a poor impotent man at the pool of Bethesda. John V. 1—16.

JOHN V. 1.

SECT. XLVI. *AFTER this, there was a* great *feast of the Jews*, even the feast of the passover; [a] *and Jesus*, according to his custom, *went up to Jerusalem*, both that he might pay a religious regard to the ceremonial law, and that he might take an opportunity of teaching considerable numbers of people, assembled from distant parts and countries, where he did not appear in person.

John V. 1.

JOHN V. 1.

AFTER this, there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

[a] *A feast of the Jews*, even the feast of the passover.] It is certain from Luke vi. 1, (note[b], sect. xlix.) that *a passover* happened soon after the facts recorded in the preceding section; and most critics (after the example of Irenæus, lib. ii. cap. 39) conclude that *this* was it. And indeed, as the passover was the greatest of all their feasts, it is sometimes denoted by the word ἑορτη, even without the *article*. (See Mark xv. 6; and Luke xxiii. 17.) This chapter may, at least, be as well introduced here, as any-where else: and one has little temptation to recede from this order in favour of Mr. Manne's singular hypothesis; who supposes, that *the feast* here spoken of was the *feast of Pentecost*, and that this whole chapter is transposed, and should come in at the end of the sixth. How little this is capable of defence, we shall endeavour to shew in the notes on John vi. 1, and 4; see sect. lxxviii. note [b] and [c].

SECT. XLVI.

John V. 2.

2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep *market*, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue. Bethesda, having five porches.

Now, it is well known, that *there is at Jerusalem, near the sheep-*[*market*],[b] *a pool*, or great reservoir of water,[c] *which is called in the Hebrew language, Bethesda*, or the House of Mercy; and was indeed, as the name intimates, a kind of hospital, *having five porticos*, or cloysters,[d] built round it, to accommodate and shelter those who might resort to it for pleasure, convenience, or cure: for the water was highly esteemed on account of some medicinal virtues which attended it, and the benefit many had received by bathing in it; and its reputation was greatly advanced, since those miraculous circumstances had been observed, which we shall presently mention.

3 In these lay a great multitued of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

In these cloysters *were laid a great number of sick* and diseased *persons*, such as were either *blind*, or *lame*, or had any part of their body *withered*; who either came, or were brought thither, in expectation of a cure, and lay there *waiting for the moving of the water.*

4 For an angel

For God, to add the greater lustre to his Son's miracles, as well as to shew that his ancient people were not entirely forgotten by him,[e] had been pleased of late to perform some supernatural cures at this place. *For at a certain season*,[f] which returned at some particular pe-

[b] *Near the sheep-market.*] I chuse to retain the common translation of *sheep-market* rather than *gate*; because, if the report of the best travellers is to be credited, the place shewn for the pool of Bethesda is much nearer the temple, than the sheep-gate could be. (Compare Neh. iii. 1; and xii. 39.)

[c] *A pool*, or great reservoir of water.] The etymology of the word κολυμβηθρα intimates, it was *a place to swim in*; so that it seems to me to have been a kind of bath, like those near Jericho, where Aristobulus was drowned by Herod's order as he was swimming; (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xv. cap. 3. § 3. I do not find any satisfactory proof, (though many have asserted it,) that the sheep to be sacrificed were washed here, or that the blood of the sacrifices ran into it: yet this is the foundation of that strange conjecture of Dr. Hammond, which we shall presently mention.

[d] *Having five porticos*, or cloysters.] It is a very probable thought of Dr. Lightfoot, [in his Harmony in loc.] that the bason itself might be in the form of a pentagon, and that these cloysters might correspond to its five sides.

[e] To add the greater lustre to his Son's miracles, &c.] These reasons are suggested, and well illustrated, in Mr. Calvin's judicious notes on this story.

[f] *At a certain season.*] Though κατα καιρον might be sometimes rendered, *at that time*, (as Rom. v. 6.) and some have therefore thought the passover, or the feast that was mentioned just before, to be the season when *the angel came and stirred the water*; yet, as the words will very justly bear the sense that has been given them in our translation, there is no reason why we should suppose it, to have only been *an annual miracle*, which would but needlessly increase the difficulty. Indeed the expectation of the people intimates it was at some particular periods, though probably they were not fixed in such a way, as that they certainly could tell the stated times of their return; at least we know not what they were, nor can it be determin-

SECT. XLVI. John v. 4.

riods, an unusual motion was discovered in the water; and from the marvellous effects of it, it was rightly concluded, that at that time, *an angel descended into the pool, and stirred the water*,[g] by which a healing virtue was communi-

went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whoso-

ed from this indefinite expression. And if it be thus taken to refer to a certain hour of the day, or day of the week, (perhaps *the sabbath*, which was the day that they were now expecting it,) κατα καιρον will signify, at every such time, ως κατ' ενιαυτον every year, Heb. x. 1; and κατ' ημεραν, every day, Acts iii. 46; 47.

g *An angel descended into the pool, and stirred the water.*] The late English version renders it *a messenger*, agreeable to the strange hypothesis of Dr. Hammond; who thinks that *this water* had contracted a *natural virtue* by *washing the carcases and entrails of the sacrifices* in this pool; and that *on stirring it up*, that virtue exerted itself the more; so that a proper officer was appointed for that purpose: a thought so unphilosophical, as well as ungrounded in history and antiquity, that one would wonder how so learned a man could fall upon it.—Mr. Fleming, to avoid the apparent difficulties of the literal interpretation, concludes, that the latter part of the third, and the whole fourth verse, is a spurious addition of some ignorant monk, in the eighth or ninth century; because that part is wanting in Beza's manuscripts, and is written by a later hand in the margin of that in the French king's library, which Lamy in his Harmony so much extols. But I cannot acquiesce in this omission, since the passage in question, is found in all the other most celebrated manuscripts, as also in the Syriac version, and all the rest in the Polyglott bible: and besides this, the seventh verse (which none dispute,) implies that there was a *miraculous virtue* in the water *after it was troubled*, which extended only to the *first* that went in, and cured his disease, whatever it were; so that the chief difficulties would still remain, were Mr. Fleming's criticism to be allowed. (see his Christology, Vol. I. p. 13—15.)—I cannot here discuss the matter at large; but beg leave, in a few words, to hint at what seems to me the easiest solution of this *greatest of difficulties* in the history of the Evangelists, in which, of all others, the learned answerers of Mr. Woolston have generally given me the least satisfaction, and which few commentators enter into; and I am pleased to find, long since I wrote this note, that the ingenious Dr. Pearce agrees with me in the most material circumstances of this hypothesis. (See his excellent Vindication of Christ's miracles, p. 68, *& seq.*)—I imagine *this pool* might have been remarkable for some *mineral virtue* attending the water; which is the more probable, as Jerom tells us, it was of a very high colour: this, together with its being so very *near the temple*, where a *bath* was so much needed for religious purposes, may account for the building such stately *cloysters* round it, *three* of which remain to this day; (see Maundrell's Travels, p. 108.) Some time before *this passover*, an extraordinary *commotion* was probably observed in the water; and Providence so ordered it, that the next person who accidentally bathed here, being under some great disorder, found an immediate and unexpected *cure*: the like phenomenon in some other desperate case was probably observed on a second commotion: and these commotions and cures might happen periodically, perhaps every sabbath, (for that it was yearly none can prove,) for some weeks or months. This the Jews would naturally ascribe to some *angelic power*, as they did afterwards *the voice from heaven*, (John xii. 29.) though no *angel* appeared. And they and St. John had reason to do it, as it was the *scripture scheme*, that these benevolent *spirits* had been, and frequently are, the invisible instruments of good to the children of men; (see Psal. xxxiv. 7; xci. 11; Dan. iii. 28; and vi. 22.) On their making so ungrateful a return to Christ for this miracle, and those wrought at the former passover, and in the intermediate space, this *celestial visitant* probably from this time returned no more; and therefore it may be observed, that though the evangelist speaks of *the pool* as *still* at Jerusalem when he wrote, yet he mentions the *descent of the angel*, as a thing which *had been*, but not as still continuing, (compare ver. 2, and 4.) This may account for the surprising silence of Josephus, in a story which made so much for the honour of his nation. He was himself not born when it happened; and though he might have heard the report of it, he would perhaps, (as is the modern way,) oppose speculation and hypothesis to

SECT. XLVI.

John V. 4.

ever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

cated to it; and *the first* person *therefore that went in, after the stirring of the water, was* instantly *cured,*[h] *whatever the distemper was that he* before *was seized with.*

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

And it now happened, that *a certain man was* lying *there, who had been thirty-eight years disabled* by an illness which had seized his nerves, and taken away the use of all his limbs.

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case,* he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

Jesus then *seeing him, as he lay* by the side of the pool, *and knowing that he had been now a long time* [*in this* melancholy *condition,*] *says to him,* with a view to stir up his attention to himself, and to engage him to reflect on his own helpless state, and on the greatness of the mercy he designed him, *Dost thou desire to be cured* of thine infirmity? *The* poor *disabled man answered him, Sir,* I cannot but earnestly desire it, but am now ready to despair of being so happy; for I am poor as well as lame; and *I have no man to* wait on me, and *put me into the pool when the water is stirred; and* my own motions are so slow that, *while I am coming* towards it, *another descends before me,* and enjoys the benefit of the miracle.

7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

Upon this, *Jesus says to him,* with an air of divine majesty and authority, *Arise, take up thy couch* on thy shoulders, *and walk* away with it, to shew how perfectly thou art recovered.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked:—

And such virtue attended these words, that *the man immediately became well; and,* leaping up in a transport of wonder and joy, he *took up his couch, and walked* away with it to his own house, through some of the most public parts of the city.

—And on the same day was the sabbath.

Now on that day that this miraculous cure was wrought, *it was the sabbath*: yet Christ commanded him, even on that day, to carry his

fact; and like Dr. Wellwood in a much plainer case, (see his letter relating to Maillard's cure,) have recourse to some indigested and unmeaning harangues on the unknown force of imagination: or if he secretly suspected it to be true, his dread of the marvellous, and fear of disgusting his Pagan readers with it, might as well lead him to suppress this, as to disguise *the passage through the red sea,* and *the Divine voice from mount Sinai,* in so mean and foolish a manner as it is known he does. And the relation in which this fact stood to the history of Jesus, would make him peculiarly cautious in touching upon it, as it would have been so difficult to handle it at once with decency and safety.

[h] *The first that went in—was cured.*] This may be well considered as a circumstance wisely ordered by Providence, to illustrate the superior power and goodness of *the Son of God,* who, not at *distant periods* of time, but *every day,* not only performed *a single cure,* but *healed whole multitudes* that resorted to him.

SECT. XLVI.

John v. 10.

couch, both to shew his own authority, and to exercise the faith and obedience of his patient. *The Jews therefore*, who saw him pass by in this manner, *said to him that was cured, It is the sabbath-day;* and therefore *it is not lawful for thee* thus *to carry a couch*, or to bear any burthen whatsoever. (Compare Jer. xvii. 21, 22; and Neh. xiii. 15—19.) How is it then, that thou art so presumptuous as to profane this
11 holy day? But *he answered them*, by giving an account of his cure, and only added, *He that* miraculously healed and *made me well*, and restored me with a word to this health and strength, *even he*[i] *said to me, Take up thy couch, and walk* away with it; and I could not question his authority to dispense with such a ceremonial
12 precept. And upon this, dropping all mention of the cure, and only fixing on what seemed liable to exception,[k] *they asked him then, Who is the man that said unto thee*, on this sacred day, *Take up thy couch, and walk* away with
13 it? *Now he that was healed, did not* at that time *know who it was* that had cured him; *for as there was a crowd of people in the place, Jesus had* modestly *slipped away*[l] among them, as soon as he had spoken the healing word.

14 But *afterwards, Jesus findeth him in* the court of *the temple, and said unto him, Behold*, by the singular mercy of God, *thou art* now *recovered* to health and vigour; but take heed that thou *sin no more, lest something* yet *worse befall thee;* for thou knowest in thine own conscience, that the iniquities of thy youth brought this calamity upon thee,[m] and the deliverance

10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath-day: It is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed.

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in *that* place.

14 Afterwards, Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

[i] *Even he.*] There seems to be this emphasis in the word ἐκεῖνος, in this connection after ὁ ποιήσας. It is very far from being an *expletive*, though few versions take any notice of it.

[k] Only fixing on what seemed liable to exception.] They do not ask, *Who is it, that has made thee well?* but, *Who is it that bade thee to take up thy couch* upon the sabbath day? though he had just told them it was the author of his cure that gave him that command: for all that they proposed was, not to hear of any good that had been done, to engage their admiration and applause, but to lay hold of some occasion to find fault, to gratify the pride and malice of a censorious temper—I am obliged to Grotius for this delicate remark, which well illustrates their partiality and malignity.

[l] Modestly *slipped away.*] The word ἐξένευσεν (as Casaubon observes in his learned note on the place) is an elegant metaphor borrowed from *swimming;* and we may thus observe, how well it expresses the easy unobserved manner, in which he, as it were, *glided* through them; while, like a stream of water, they opened before him, and immediately closed again, leaving no trace of the way he had taken.

[m] The iniquities of thy youth brought this calamity upon thee.] Our Lord seems not merely to have referred to a

SECT. XLVI.

thou hast now received, will be a dreadful aggravation of thy future guilt.

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole.

The man then informed himself of those that stood by, who it was that spoke to him; and knowing him to be the person to whom he was obliged for his cure, he *went away* from the temple, *and told the Jews* who had before examined him, *that it was Jesus* of Nazareth *who had restored him to health;* expecting, no doubt, by this discovery, to have procured him that honour and respect, which was due to so much power and goodness. *And* yet *the Jews* were so far from paying him any just acknowledgments, that, on the contrary, they *persecuted Jesus on this account, and endeavoured to put him to death,* as an impious transgressor of the law, *because he had done these things on the sabbath-day:* and, in pursuance of that unrighteous and barbarous purpose, they brought an accusation against him before the sanhedrim,[n] which occasioned the large and excellent apology, related in the two following sections.

John V. 15.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath-day. 16

IMPROVEMENT.

WHAT reason have we humbly to adore that *Almighty Being,* who *kills and makes alive,* who *wounds and heals!* (Deut. xxxii. 39.) If the *Jews* had cause of thankfulness for this *miraculous* interposition, surely those virtues which God has in a *natural* way bestowed on *medicines,* and that sagacity which he has given to *men* for the discovery of those virtues, are matter of much greater acknowledgment, as the blessing is so much more extensive and lasting. Verse 4.

But how much greater still are our obligations to him, for the *blessings* of his *gospel,* and the *ordinances* of his worship, those *waters of life* by which our *spiritual maladies* are healed, and vigour restored to our enfeebled souls! Let us humbly *attend them;* yet during that attendance, let us look beyond them: for surely the efficacy of this *pool of Bethesda* did not more depend upon the *descent of the angel,* than the efficacy of the noblest *ordinances* depends on that *blessed Spirit,* which operates in and by them.

general notion, that *diseases* were the *punishment of sin,* but to glance at some irregularities of the man's younger years, which, though they were committed before Christ was born, (for we are told, ver. 5, that this disabled man had laboured under his disorder *thirty-eight years,*) yet were perfectly known to him.

[n] Before the sanhedrim.] See the reason for this conjecture in the next section, ver. 17, note [s], compared with ver. 33.

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Verse 3 *Multitudes* were continually *attending* at this *pool:* and *why* then *is the house of God forsaken?* where not *one alone*, but *many*, at the same moment, may receive spiritual sight and strength; yea, and life from the dead? Yet, alas! under the *diseases of the soul*, how few *desire to be made whole!* Blessed 6 *Jesus!* if thou hast awakened *that desire* in us, we would adore thee for it, as a *token for good;* and would lift up our believing eyes to thee, in humble expectation that thou wilt graciously fulfil it.

14 *The man*, who was lately languishing *on his couch*, we quickly after find *in the temple:* and *where* should *they* be found, who have been raised up from *beds of weakness*, and brought out from chambers of confinment, but *in the sanctuary*, rendering their praises to the *God of their mercies?* How reasonable is *the caution* which *our Lord* gave him there! *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.* May we see *sin* as *the root* of all our *afflictions;* and, by the bitterness of *them*, may *sin* be embittered to us, and our hearts fortified against relapsing into it, especially when we have been *chastised*, and *restored again!*

15 One would have expected that, when this grateful creature published the *name* of his *Benefactor*, crowds should have thronged about *Jesus*, to have heard the *words of his mouth*, and to have received the *blessings of his gospel;* and that the whole nation should have gloried in the *presence* of such a *person*, as far more valuable, than the *descent* of a heavenly *spirit* at some particular *seasons* for the cure of their diseases, or even the *abode* of an incarnate *angel* among them, would have been. But instead of this, behold the malignity of our fallen nature, 16 and the force of stubborn prejudice! They surround him with an hostile intent; they even *conspire* against his beneficial *life;* and for an imagined transgression in a point of *ceremony*, would have *put out* this *light in Israel.* Let us not wonder then, if *our good be evil spoken of:* (Rom. xiv. 16.) Let us not wonder: if even candour, benevolence, and usefulness, do not wholly disarm the enmity of some; especially of those who have been taught to prefer *sacrifice to mercy;* and who, disrelishing the genuine contents of the *gospel*, naturally seek occasion to slander and persecute the *professors*, and especially the *defenders* of it.

SECT. XLVII.

Christ vindicates the miracle which he had wrought at the pool on the sabbath day, and solemnly declares the dignity of his person and office. John V. 17—30.

JOHN V. 17.

THE miracle which he had just performed, was a plain evidence of his divine authority

JOHN V. 17.

BUT Jesus answer-

ed them, My father worketh hitherto, and I work.

and power: *but Jesus* being questioned by the Jews, and, as it seems, examined before their most solemn council,[a] for the cure he had wrought on the sabbath-day, he took the opportunity of declaring at large the dignity of his person, the evidence of his mission, and the absolute necessity of faith in him to their eternal salvation;[b] while, in reply to the malicious charge which they brought against him, he *answered them* as follows: *My* heavenly *Father*, in the administration of his providential kingdom, *worketh* continually, from the beginning of the world *even till now;* and upon sabbath-days, as well as others, he exerts that unremitting and unwearied energy, which is the life of the creation: *and*, in like manner, *I also work*, in obedience to the intimations of his will, and in subserviency to his glory. And in this very action I have given you so visible a proof that I am directed and assisted by him, that you ought humbly to acquiesce in it, without presuming to cavil at what is so evidently divine, or to limit the majesty of heaven by those rules, which he has prescribed to his creatures.

SECT. XLVII. John V. 17.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father; making himself equal with God.

But upon hearing this suggested by our Lord in vindication of himself, they were so far from yielding to the argument, that, *for this very reason*, the resentment of his adversaries was increased; and being *therefore* more incensed against him than before, the rulers of *the Jews endeavoured the more* eagerly *to put him to death, because* (as they imagined,) *he had not only violated the sabbath, but had* now *also* gone so far as even to have *called God his own Father*,[c] in *so* peculiar and appropriating a sense, *as* in effect *to make himself equal with God:*

18

[a] Before their most solemn council.] I here follow Mr. Fleming's opinion (in his Christology, Vol. II. p. 296. which seems to be confirmed by ver. 33; and there appears a great deal of additional propriety and beauty in the discourse, when it is considered in this view.

[b] He took the opportunity of declaring at large the dignity of his person, &c.] Christ had hinted at several of these things, in his *conference with Nicodemus*, (John iii. 13—21. sect. xxvi.) who had probably reported them to his brethren. But he here expatiates more largely on some of them; and, no doubt, if Nicodemus, as a member of the council, was now present, he heard him with great pleasure and improvement.

[c] *Called God his own Father.*] This is the plain and literal sense of the original, πατέρα ἴδιον. The whole nation of the Jews thought *God their Father* (John viii. 41.) and they could not therefore have accounted it *blasphemy* to have used the phrase, had they not interpreted it in so high and appropriating sense.

SECT. XLVII. John V. 18.

while he thus argued his own right to work on the sabbath-day, from God's working upon it; though this was evidently no argument with respect to mankind in general, nor had ever been pleaded by the greatest of the prophets in such a view.

19 *Jesus therefore*, to explain the matter more fully to them, and to leave them yet more inexcusable in their malicious opposition to him, *answered and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you*, and do most faithfully and solemnly declare, That *the Son* of God, great and glorious as he is, now acts in an avowed subjection to the authority of the Father, and *can do nothing of himself*,[d] in pursuance of any distinct schemes or separate interest of his own, *unless he see the Father doing it*,[e] or perceive him intimating it as his pleasure that it should be done: *for whatsoever* are the *things* that *he* (that is, the Father) *doeth, even these likewise doeth the Son* in a most intimate conjunction with him; at all times cheerfully complying with his purposes, and esteeming it his honour always to be
20 employed in his service. *For the Father loveth the Son, and* that with so entire an affection, that he *sheweth him all things that he himself doeth*,[f] letting him unto the secret of

19 Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself

[d] *The Son can do nothing of himself.*] I cannot forbear mentioning a remarkable note of the learned Elsner (Observ. Vol. I. p. 307, & seq.) in which he shews by a great variety of instances, that the later heathen writers seem to have ascribed to Minerva, as the daughter of Jupiter, many things which our sacred scriptures speak of Christ, as the Son of God.

[e] *Unless he see the Father doing it.*] Whether our Lord here means in the general, *unless he see it to be correspondent to the Father's schemes*; or whether he refers to any peculiar divine impulse, which he sometimes felt upon his mind, leading him to exert his miraculous power in this or that instance, I cannot certainly determine; but rather incline to the latter, which might also be comprehended in ver. 17.—The particle ἐὰν μὴ, which is exactly the same in signification with εἰ μὴ, is here also used in a less proper sense. See the note on John xvii. 12. sect. clxxix; and compare John viii. 38. sect. civ.

[f] *Sheweth him all things that he himself doeth.*] The editors of the Prussian Testament say, that the word δείκνυσιν, which we have rendered *sheweth*, signifies here to *teach*, or *form to* any thing; as a *master forms his scholar* to do what he himself doeth, and teaches him the secrets of his art or profession: but I cannot acquiesce in this sense, as expressing the whole meaning of the phrase. It rather refers to the ample and comprehensive knowledge, which the Son has of the whole plan of the Father's councils, in all their mutual relations and dependencies; whereas the prophets, and the apostles too, had, in comparison of this, but very limited and contracted views. Compare Isa. xl. 10, where it is said (as we have no room to doubt) of Christ, and probably in this sense—*his work is before him.*—Dr. Whitby refers αὐτὸς to *the Son*; and understands it as if it had been said, *Whatever the Son doeth, is by the direction of the Father*: but I think the Genius of the Greek language would not in that sense have allowed the repetition of αὐτὸς, but it would rather have been said, πάντα ἃ ποιεῖ δείκνυσιν αὐτῷ: not to

doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

his councils, and teaching him in the most wonderful and divine manner to act in prosecution of them; *and he will shew*, or point out to *him* far *greater works than these* which he has hitherto performed; which shall hereafter be accomplished by him, *that you may* all be filled with *wonder*, though you will not be open to conviction. SECT. XLVII. John V. 20.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

You have now seen the cure of one, who had been long disabled by a disease, but I have not yet raised any from the dead: yet you shall quickly see, that it is not for want of power; *for as the Father*, whenever he pleases, *raises up and animates the dead, so also* you shall have sufficient evidence, that *the Son animates whom he will.* 21 22

22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

Nor is it to be wondered at, that he should have so great a power lodged in him; *for the Father* now in his own person *judges no man, but has given* the administration of *all judgment to the Son*, before whom all men are at last to appear, and by whom they are to be assigned to their final and eternal state.

23 That all *men* should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

And this important power God has committed to me,[5] *that* notwithstanding the humble form in which I now appear, *all may* be engaged to *honour the Son, even as they honour the Father* himself; yielding an unreserved homage and obedience to him, as what is necessary to approve their duty and fidelity to God: for *he that*, in such a circumstance, and on such a discovery, *honoureth not the Son*, as worthy of the highest veneration, *honoureth not the Father that sent him*, but affronting him in the person of so dear and so great an ambassador, must expect to be treated as an enemy and a rebel. 23

insist upon it, that the sense in which I have explained it is much nobler, and not so nearly the same with what Christ had said in the preceding verse.

[5] This important power God has committed to me.] Though our Lord here speaks of himself in the *third person*, yet afterwards, in ver. 30, & *seq.* he speaks in the *first*; and common sense would teach all that heard him, that by *the Son* he here meant *himself*. Now I appeal to any unprejudiced person to judge, whether our Lord's making such a declaration as this before the Jewish rulers, and probably in full council, was not far more liable to exception than merely his calling the temple his Father's house (John ii. 16.) at his first passover; in the same manner as he long before had done, in calling God *his Father*, even when he was but *twelve years old*, (Luke ii. 49.) So little is there in Mr. Manne's argument from that text. (See note [c] on John ii. 16, p. 143.)—And it is also to be remembered that, according to Mr. Manne's Scheme of the Harmony, he makes this to have happened about *ten months before Christ's death*, and long before many of those charges to his disciples, *not to make him known*; from whence this gentleman argues, that the forecited words in John ii. 16, could not be spoken till his *last passover*.

SECT. XLVII.

John V. 24.

This is a truth of the utmost consequence to your final happiness, and therefore I insist the more largely upon it: see then that none of you presume to pass it slightly over; for *verily, verily, I say unto you,* and solemnly declare it in the presence of you all, *He that heareth my word* with an attentive regard, *and* truly *believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting life:* he is already entitled to it, yea, it is already begun in his soul; *and* he shall shortly possess it in its full perfection, and *shall not come into condemnation* for any former offences; *but is passed from* that state of *death* in which men naturally are, *to* a state of *life,* security, and felicity. Think not this an incredible assertion; for *verily, verily, I say unto you,* and in the strongest terms renew the important declaration,[h] That *the season cometh, and is now* just at hand, *when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear* [it] *shall* immediately *live;* for within these few months there shall be some dead bodies raised to life by the word of his power, (See Mark v. 41; Luke vii. 14; John xi. 43; and compare Mat. xxvii. 52, 53.) and many souls that are dead in sin shall, by his grace, be quickened and made spiritually alive[i]. *For as the Father has* originally and essentially *life in himself, so he has also given to the Son, that he should,* for these purposes of glorious and divine operation, *have* a principle of *life in himself* to be communicated unto whom he will. (See 1 Cor. xv. 45.) *And he has given him authority,* not only to quicken men now, but *also to execute* final *judgment, because he is the Son of man;* and as he has voluntarily humbled himself to so lowly a form,

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

[h] Renew the important declaration.] These repetitions of this solemn asseveration are by no means vain, considering the vast importance of the truth; and how incredible it would appear, that he who stood before them in so humble a form, was in reality the Lord of Life, and the universal Judge. See note [f] on John i. 51, p. 134.

[i] Some dead bodies raised to life, and many souls made spiritually alive.] I express it thus ambiguously, because I am something doubtful, whether it may not refer to the *conversion* of sinners by *Christ's ministry,* rather than the *resurrection* of a few by his *miraculous power.* It is well known, sinners are often represented in scripture, as *dead;* (Mat. viii. 22; Eph. ii. 1; v. 14; 1 Tim. v. 6; and Jude, ver. 12.) and if the expression, ὁι ἀκουσαντες, is to be taken, as we render it, with the most literal exactness, for *they that hear,* or they, and they alone, that so attend unto the *voice* of Christ as to believe in him—it will then limit it to this sense; which seems also favoured by ver. 24, where *death* plainly signifies a *state of sin and condemnation.*

(see Phil. ii. 5.—11.) God will accomplish to him all those glorious predictions, which represent him as possessed of universal and perpetual dominion, and coming in the clouds of heaven in that day, when the judgment is set, and the books are opened. (See Dan. vii. 9—14; Phil. ii. 8, 9; and Heb. xii. 2.) SECT. XLVII. John V. 27.

28 Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

And therefore *wonder not at this*, which I have now declared concerning the resurrection of a few, shortly to be expected; *for the hour is coming, in which all that are* dead and buried now, and all that shall then be lying *in the graves* though mouldered away and consumed there, *shall hear his voice*, 28

29 And shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

And shall come forth out of the dust, *they that have done good, to the resurrection of* eternal *life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of* final *damnation*. See to it therefore, that you shew a due regard to him, before whom you yourselves are to stand; and do not rashly condemn a Person, from whose lips you are to receive your decisive sentence. Not that any corrupt bias of partial resentment will be brought into the proceedings of that day, or into any of my conduct; for *I can of myself do nothing*, but now act by a delegated power as the minister of a righteous God: and therefore *as I hear I judge*, pronouncing according to the evidence of facts before me; *and* upon this account it must appear, that *my judgment is just; because I seek not any* distinct *will* or separate interest *of my own*,[k] *but the* wise and holy *will of the Father who sent me*; which is, that every man should be treated according to his real character, and be the object of favour or of wrath, as his temper and conduct have been upright or wicked. 29

30 I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. 30

IMPROVEMENT.

With what humble prostration of soul should we bow before the *Lord Jesus Christ*, while we read such words as these! Though he appeared under the *form of a servant*; and as *man* and *mediator*, confessed a holy subjection to *his Father*, and *his God*; yet is he *his own*, his *only-begotten Son*, the *Son whom he* Verse 19 20

[k] *I seek not any* distinct *will* or separate interest *of my own.*] This limitation the sense evidently requires. See Heb. x. 9, 10; Mat. xxvi. 39, and note [h] on Mat. xii. 7, sect. xlix.

SECT. XLVII. Verse 23 26 27 *loves*, whom he *honours*, whom he commands *all men* to *honour even as himself*, and to whom such *power* and *authority* are committed, that he is the principle of *life*, and the administrator of *judgment*. Let us adore the wisdom of such a contrivance, that he who *humbled himself* thus low, should be so *highly exalted*. Let us labour to secure an interest in him; treating him with that submission, duty, and obedience, which becomes at once the *divinity* of his *nature*, and the *dignity* of his *office*.

25 28 May we be enabled by divine grace, so to *hear the voice* of his gospel, that we may arise to a *life* of holy obedience; that we may another day *hear him* with joy, calling forth our sleeping dust, and *arise to the resurrection of life*; while those that have despised and rejected him, shall find themselves the helpless prisoners of his justice, and with reluctance and terror *come forth to the resurrection of damnation!*

SECT. XLVIII.

Christ having declared to the Jews, (and, as it seems, to the Sanhedrim,) the dignity of his person, office, and character, goes on to represent the proofs of his mission; and concludes his discourse with proper admonitions and cautions. John V. 31, *to the end.*

JOHN V. 31.

SECT. XLVIII. John V. 31. OUR Lord proceeded in his discourse to the Jews, and said, I have certainly entered a very high claim, and represented myself as a person of great dignity and authority; nor do I say it without sufficient proof. Indeed, *If I bear* this *witness of myself* alone, it must be acknowledged that *my testimony is not* immediately [*to be admitted as*] *true*:[a] you have a right to insist on other evidence; and a variety of it arises from the testimony of John, from the power of my miracles, from the testimony of the Father, and from innumerable passages in your own sacred writings.

JOHN V. 31. IF I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

32 I would then first observe that, besides what I have told you of myself, *there is another* of undoubted reputation and veracity, *that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he beareth of me is true* and credible; and well remember by the happiest tokens, the

32 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

[a] *Is not* [*to be admitted as*] *true.*] That this is the sense of the word *true* here, is very evident; and appears in part from comparing John viii. 13—17, sect. xiii.

great fact on which it especially turned:[b] nor can you reasonably take upon you to dispute it; for the person I refer to, is John the Baptist, whom your whole nation agreed to reverence, as a prophet: And you know, that *you* yourselves *sent* messengers on purpose from your own court *unto* this *John*, (John i. 19—27, sect. xx.) *and he*, in the most express terms, *bore* a faithful and honourable *testimony to the truth* of what I have now attested and referred to, assuring you that he saw the Spirit in a visible form descend upon me. *I do not indeed receive* the chief *testimony* on which I rest the credit of my mission, *from man; nevertheless, I say these things* to you, on your own principles, out of a tender and compassionate concern for your conviction, *that you*, who are now conspiring against my life, *may be saved* from that destruction which he foretold, as the portion of those who should reject me, and which the greatest of them shall not be able to escape. (Mat. iii. 10—12, sect. xvi.) *He was* indeed *a burning and a shining light*, (Ecclus. xlviii. 1.) who, to his bright and distinct knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, joined a most fervent zeal in bearing his testimony to them; *and for a while you were disposed greatly to rejoice in his light*;[c] but you did not express that continued regard to his preaching, which at his first appearance you seemed to promise.

I will not therefore insist farther on this topic, *but* proceed to other evidence. And *I have* indeed *a testimony* which is much *greater* still *than* [*that*] *of John*; *for the works* of wonder and

SECT. XLVIII. John v. 32.

33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth

34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

35 He was a burning and a shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

36 But I have a greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Fa-

[b] The great fact on which it especially turned.] The propriety and spirit of our Lord's expression, *I know that the witness which he beareth of me is true*, is much illustrated, by supposing that here is an oblique reference to that great event, *the descent of the Holy Spirit on Christ at his baptism*; on which John so expressly grounded the testimony he bore to Christ, the very next day after their messengers came to him, who probably staid some time to make their remarks on his preaching and conduct. (See John i. 29—34. sect. xxi.) And the blessed effects of *this effusion* on Christ still continued, and incessantly wrought in him.

[c] *For a while you were disposed greatly to rejoice in his light.*] Our Lord might speak thus of John though he was yet living, as *his light* was now in a great measure extinguished by his *imprisonment*; so that the argument from this text, for transposing this chapter, seems inconclusive. Had the sanhedrim, as some have supposed, imprisoned John before he was seized by Herod, (see the preface to the Russian Testament, p. 24.) our Lord would hardly have failed to reprove them for it on so natural an occasion as this.

SECT. XLVIII.

John V. 36.

mercy *which the Father has assigned* and given in commission to *me, that* according to his wise and gracious purposes *I might accomplish them* among you, *even these* miraculous *works which I* daily *perform*, are also witnesses in my behalf, and *bear* a most convincing *testimony to me, that the Father hath sent me as* his Ambassador to men, with the most ample commission to reveal his will.

ther hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

37 *And* indeed I may say, with the greatest propriety, that by these miracles, as well as by the public testimony that he gave me at my baptism, *the Father who has sent me* has with the strongest evidence confirmed my mission, and *has himself born witness to me:* nor have you any reason to dispute the testimony that he thus hath given me, [*though*] *you have never either heard his voice, nor seen his form*, as being one whom no man hath seen, nor can see; for 38 he has testified the same concerning me in his word, where he has spoken of me in the clearest manner. But, notwithstanding the submission you profess to his authority, you will not be persuaded to receive the testimony he has given; *and* after all that he has said, it is still evident that *you have not his word* cordially *abiding in you*,[d] nor do you shew a due regard even to those former revelations which you acknowledge as Divine; *for* notwithstanding all the reasons that are there given to induce you to it, *you do not believe him whom he hath sent* with a much fuller and clearer discovery of himself than any of his former messengers have brought.

37 And the Father himself which hath sent me hath borne witness of me: ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

39 *You* make it your employment and your study to peruse and *search the scriptures*[e] and enter

39 Search the

[d] *You have not his word abiding in you.*] Some would render it, *You have not his* LOGOS, that is, me, *residing among you* for any continuance of time, (see Mr. Locke's Reasonableness of Christianity, p. 65.) and refer it to Christ's making so short an abode at Jerusalem; but I prefer the more obvious sense. Compare John xv. 7.

[e] *You search the scriptures.*] There is a known ambiguity in the word ἐραυνᾶτε, which may justify either this translation or the common one; nor is it very material which is preferred. I thought the following words, which express their high opinion of the scriptures, rather suited the former; and it is exceeding probable that, at a time when the Pharisees were so impatient of the Roman yoke, they would with great diligence search the sacred oracles for predictions relating to the Messiah; though it is too plain, they had an unhappy bias on their minds, which prevented the good effects which might have been expected from that inquiry, had it been impartial.—It is also well known, that refined criticisms on their sacred writings made the most fashionable branch of learning among the Jews; in comparison of which, profane literature was held in great contempt, and indeed by many of their zealots in great abhorrence: see Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xx. cap. ult. § ult. and Mr. Biscoe's Sermons at Boyle's Lecture, p. 89, 90.

SECT. XLVIII.

scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.

into deep inquiries concerning the contents of them; *because you* very rightly *apprehend that you have* the doctrine of *eternal life in them*, that they contain the promises, and instruct you in the way of obtaining it; *and these* now *are* [*the very writings*] *which* in numberless passages *bear* a most important *testimony to me*. *And yet* the obstinacy of your hearts is such, that notwithstanding you profess so great a regard for them, *you will not come to me that you may have* that eternal *life* which they direct you to obtain in this method, but rather chuse to die under the force of your inveterate prejudices.

John V. 39.

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

40

41 I receive not honour from men.

I speak of your coming to me: but let me remind you that it is not out of an ambition of drawing multitudes about me, to follow and applaud my teaching; for the whole of my conduct proves, that *I receive not glory from men*.[f] *But* I say it out of a tender regard for your instruction and reformation; for notwithstanding your distinguished profession of piety, and the eminent station in which you are placed, *I know you*, and have observed it for some time concerning you, *that you have not the love of God in you*, that great and only principle of true religion and happiness. For *I am come* to you *in my Father's name, and* with evident credentials from him; yet *you receive me not*; which, if you had really loved him, you would undoubtedly have done: whereas *if another should come in his own name*,[g] without such credentials, and set up a scheme of temporal grandeur and dominion, *him you would* readily *receive*, in pursuit of those worldly principles which, though directly contrary to the love of God, yet bear the rule in your corrupt hearts. But *how* indeed *can you believe* in me, and fall in with such an humbling and self-denying scheme as

41

42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

42

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

43

44 How can ye be-

44

[f] *I receive not glory from men.*] The whole series of this discourse excellently shews how far our Lord was from soothing the vanity of great and learned men, in order to obtain their favour.

[g] *If another should come in his own name.*] Some think here is a reference to Barchochebas, a noted impostor in the following age, for adhering to whom the Jews were severely chastised by Adrian. (Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iv. cap. 6.) But it is certain there were many other *pretended Messiahs*, who wrought *no miracle*, and yet met with a much better reception from the Pharisees than Christ did; and I doubt not but Christ meant to include, at least, all those who appeared while the sanhedrim existed.

SECT. XLVIII.

that of my gospel, *while,* with an ambitious emulation, *you are receiving honour of each other,*[h] *and seek not that* true *honour which* [*comes*] *from* the approbation of *God alone,* and from the testimony of your consciences in his sight?

John V. 44.

lieve, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that *cometh* from God only?

45 Nevertheless, remember this, that you will another day appear self-condemned for this your infidelity: and *do not think that,* to convict you in his presence, *I will accuse you to the Father;* it will not be necessary that I should do it; for even now, *that Moses in whom you trust* as your great law-giver and patron, *is* (as it were) *your accuser* before God,[i] and charges you with being regardless of him as well as of

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye trust;

46 me. *For if you had believed Moses,* and really had that regard to him which you profess to have, *you* likewise surely *would have believed me; for he wrote concerning me,* in many most

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.

47 memorable passages.[k] *But* I will now conclude my discourse; for *if you do not believe his writings,* which are daily in your hands, and the divine authority which you so strenuously assert, *how shall* I expect that, under the power of such prejudices, *you* shall *believe my words?*

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

When our Lord had thus spoken, he withdrew; and they were so overawed with the majesty of his presence, and the unanswerable force of his discourse, that they did not attempt to seize or detain him.

[h] *You are receiving honour of each other.*] This has much more spirit, if we consider it as applied to the members of the sanhedrim, who had such distinguished *titles of honour,* than if we only take it as spoken to a mixed multitude, who might happen to surround Christ in the temple: the taste of the populace seldom lies that way.

[i] *That Moses in whom you trust is your accuser.*] This is one of the most expressive passages that can be imagined, in which Moses, their great law-giver, is represented as looking down with *indignation* upon these *elders* who gloried in being the most distinguished of *his disciples;* and seeing how injuriously they treated Jesus the great Prophet, turning himself to God with a severe accusation against them, and urging his own predictions as an aggravation of their inexcusable infidelity.

[k] *He wrote concerning me* in many most memorable passages.] Christ might perhaps intend to refer to what Moses had written,—of *the seed of the woman;* (Gen. iii. 15.)—of *the seed of Abraham, in which all the nations of the earth should be blessed;* (Gen. xxii. 18.)—of *the Shiloh who should come to gather the people;* (Gen. xlix. 10.) —and of *the prophet whom God should raise up unto them from among their brethren;* (Deut. xviii. 18.)—as well as to the many *ceremonial institutions,* which had their final accomplishment in him.

IMPROVEMENT.

How various is the evidence of our *Redeemer's mission*, and with what pleasure should we trace it in the *testimony* which *John* bore, the *miracles* which himself wrought, the *testimony of the Father* to him, and the *predictions* which the *prophets* uttered and recorded! To confirm our faith in all, let us be daily *searching the scriptures*, as the oracles of God, and the great fountains of life and salvation. We profess a regard to them: may that regard never be our condemnation! or the blessed *penmen* witness against us, as *Moses* against those who gloried in his writings, and yet wanted a true faith in them! SECT. XLVIII. Verse 32—37 39 45

In proportion to the degree in which we are convinced of the *truth of Christ's religion*, let us set ourselves to cultivate the *temper* which he exercised. He *sought not glory from men*, but made his *Father's will* the rule of his actions, and his *Father's honour* the end of them. Let us not greedily catch at *human applause*, but aim at an infinitely nobler object, even *the honour that cometh from God alone*, the only true judge of actions and characters, because the only discerner of hearts. 41 44

May we have, not only *his word* in our hands, but *his love remaining in us*; that thereby our natural aversion to the methods of his saving grace in the gospel may be subdued, that notwithstanding the obstinacy of our degenerate wills, we may *come unto Christ, that we may have life!* May we *receive him* with the greatest readiness, as *coming* to us *in his Father's name*; and not only *for a season rejoice in his light*, but stedfastly *continue in his word*, as *made known to all nations for the obedience of faith*; that the advantages which we enjoy may not be found to aggravate our guilt, and to condemn us with the unbelieving *Jews!* 42 40 43

Christ shewed the tenderness of his compassion even in the severity of his rebukes, and spoke these awful and awakening words, that these his unjust and inveterate enemies *might be saved.* May they be the *power of God unto our salvation!* as they will be, if we *believe in him whom he hath sent.* 34 33

SECT. XLIX.

Christ vindicates his disciples from the censure of the Pharisees, for rubbing the ears of corn in their hands as they passed through the fields on a sabbath-day. Luke VI. 1—5; Mat. XII. 1—8; Mark II. 23, *to the end.*

LUKE VI. 1.

LUKE VI. 1. AND it came to pass AFTER the preceding conference with the Jews, our Lord departed from Jerusalem, where he had met with such an ungrateful re-

SECT. XLIX. Luke VI. 1.

ception, and returned towards Galilee ;[a] *And it came to pass, that about this time, on the first sabbath after the second* [*day of unleavened bread,*[b]] *Jesus,* attended as usual by a train of followers, (who had been with him at the feast), *went through the corn-fields ; and as his disciples were hungry, and* the barley was now ripe, they *began as they went, to pull off* some of *the ears of corn ;*[c] *and rubbing them in their hands* to break off the beards and the husk, *did eat* the grain.

pass, [at that time,] on the second sabbath after the first, that [Jesus] went through the corn-fields; and his disciples [were an hungred,] and began [MAR. as they went,] to pluck the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them* in their hands. [MAT. XII. 1. MARK II. 23.]

[a] Returned towards Galilee.] We may reasonably conclude this, because both Mark and Luke mention his being there quickly after this story. Compare Mark iii. 7, and Luke vi. 12, 13 with vii. 1.

[b] *The first sabbath after the second day of unleavened bread.*] So I venture to render δευτεροπρωτον, the word used by Luke; yet not without much hesitation; for it is so singular an expression, that (as Erasmus long since did,) I despair of seeing its sense exactly ascertained.—Could Theophylact or his very learned followers, Scaliger, Lightfoot, and Whitby, produce any instance of δευτεροδευτερον being used for the *second*, or δευτεροτριτον for the *third* of the sabbaths between the passover and pentecost, I should entirely acquiesce in the translation here given; which supposes, this was the first of those seven sabbaths which followed the *second day of unleavened bread*, from whence the *fifty days* to *pentecost* were to be computed; see Lev. xxiii. 15, 16.—On the other hand, could the great Grotius or his followers Woltzogenius and Brennius, have produced an instance in which πρωτοπρωτον, or πρωτοπρωτον occurs, there would have been reason to conclude with them, that there were *three prime Sabbaths*, which were accounted sabbaths of peculiar solemnity; the *first*, that after *pentecost*; and the *third*, that after the *feast of tabernacles*.—For want of sufficient authorities to support either of these interpretations, Sir Isaac Newton (on proph. p. 154.) after Epiphanius and Beza, has advanced another yet less probable than either; which is, that it was the *second of the two great feasts of the passover*; as we call *Easter-day* itself *High Easter*, and its *Octave*, *Low Easter*, or *Low Sunday*. But though the *seventh day of unleavened bread* was to be *a holy convocation*, yet *the law* expressly allowed the Jews to *dress victuals* on it; (Exod. xii. 16.) which would have afforded so direct an answer to the Pharisees' objection, that one can hardly suppose Christ would have failed to urge it.—On either of these *two last* suppositions, it must be rendered, *the second prime sabbath*: but as I could not translate it at all, without fixing it one way or the other, I chose the former rendering, for these *two* reasons: (1.) Because I cannot find that there is any divine command to observe the *sabbaths* which followed the day of the *three great feasts*, and particularly that of *pentecost*, with any such peculiar solemnity, as to afford sufficient reason for this distinguishing title; though large sacrifices were to be offered *every day* for *seven days* after the *passover*, and for *eight* during the *feast of tabernacles*; which are distinctly prescribed, Numb. xxviii. 16—25, and xxix. 12, & *seq.* And (2,) Because, considering what Philo and Isidorus assert, and Josephus intimates, of *corn being ripe* in Judea about the time of the *passover*, (see Petav. Var. Diss. lib. ii. cap. 11. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xviii. cap. 18. and Joseph. Antiq. lib. iii. cap. 10. § 5.) and *the law* of presenting the *loaves* made of *new wheat* on the day of *pentecost*, (Lev. xxiii. 17.) it seems probable the *harvest* was generally concluded *before that day*. (See also Scalig. Emend. Temp. Proleg. p. 25, 26, and lib. vi. p. 557, 558.—I suppose these considerations, or the authority of such great names, may have determined most harmonizers to introduce this story immediately after the fifth chapter of John; nor do I see any reason to vary from them herein. And the order would be the same, if Reland's conjecture were to be admitted, that the πρωτοπρωτον was the *first sabbath* in the *civil*, and the δευτεροπρωτον the *first* in the *ecclesiastical year*. (See Reland Antiq. Heb. lib. iv. cap. 9.) But this is a conjecture, which has so little to support it even in hypothesis, as scarcely to deserve a mention.

[c] *To pull off* some of *the ears of corn.*] The word σαχυας, here used, may indif-

SECT. XLIX.

2 And certain of the Pharisees [when they saw *it*] said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the sabbath-days? [MAT. XII. 2.]

MAT. XII. 2. [And] they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath-day. [MARK. II. 24.]

LUKE VI. 3. And Jesus answering them said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when [MARK, he had need and] was an hungred, [MARK, he] and they which were with him? [MAT. XII. 3.—MARK II. 25.]

4 How he went into the house of God [MARK, in the days of Abiathar the high

And some of the Pharisees, who were employed by the rulers to follow him from place to place, as malicious spies on all his discourses and actions, *when they saw it*, were offended at the time and circumstances of the action,[d] and reproving his disciples, *said to them, Why do ye* thus gather and rub out the grain; for *that* is a kind of servile work, *which it is not lawful* for any one *to do on the sabbath days? And* that they might involve their master also in the same charge, though he did not himself join with them in it, *they said to him, Behold*, these *thy disciples*, in thy very presence, *do that which it is not lawful* for any one *to do on the sabbath*; and wilt thou permit it to pass without a reproof?

Luke VI. 2.

Mat. XII. 2.

And Jesus said in answer to them, Have ye that value yourselves so much on your acquaintance with the sacred writings, and set up for the expositors of them to others, *never read that which David did, in his* extreme *necessity, when he and they that were with him were hungry? How he went into* the tabernacle, which is *the house of God, in the days of Abiathar*, who was afterwards *the high priest*,[e] *and* then officiated

Luke VI. 3.

4

ferently signify ears of any kind of grain; but it might probably be barley, that being first ripe in those parts. (Compare Exod. ix. 31, 32.) Sir Isaac Newton lays a great deal of stress on this, for fixing the time of Christ's death; concluding *this passover* must happen *late*, and that it was *two years* before *that*, in which our Lord was crucified; and consequently that Christ's death must be fixed to such a time, that *the passover two years before it* may be a *late one*. But I fear the argument is not so conclusive as one could wish, considering with what ingenuity and labour it is pursued. For that great man seems to have forgot, how expressly Maimonides and the other rabbies assert, that the Jews did not always fix their passover by the *vernal equinox*; but, in case of a backward spring, added an *intercalary month* between *that* and *Abib*. (See Lightfoot's Hor Heb. on Mat. xii. 1.) If this be credible, it shews how little we can ascertain the Jewish passovers by astronomical calculations; and if it be not, why did Sir Isaac proceed in his computations on those rules for the translation of feasts, which we have only by late *rabbinical tradition*? See Bochart. Hieroz. lib. ii. cap. 50.

[d] *Offended at the time and circumstances of the action.*] The law so expressly allowed, to *pluck ears of corn* as one pased through a field, that, malignant as they were, they pretended not to find fault with the thing itself; (see Deut. xxxiii. 25.) but they were perverse enough, to think this a kind of *reaping* and *dressing* the grain, which was indeed forbidden on the *Sabbath*.

[e] *Abiathar*, who was afterwards *the high-priest*.] If our present reading (which Beza suspects, though older than the Syriac version,) be allowed as genuine, here is a remarkable instance of a person being designed by an office, which he did not bear till *after* the date of the event referred to; in like manner as Cyrenius (Luke ii. 2.) is called governor of Syria, because he was so *after the enrolment*. It seems indeed that Ahimelech was *High Priest* when David took the shew-bread, though in all the story he is only called *the Priest*; and as it is merely an arbitrary supposition, that the father was sometimes called Abiathar, or the son of Ahimelech, it seems impossible to defend the received reading, otherwise than by supposing, with Grotius, that as Abiathar was a much more

SECT. XLIX.

for his father Ahimelech; (see 1 Sam. xxi. 3. *& seq.*) Have ye forgot that this faithful servant of God, this man after his own heart, *took and eat the shew-bread*, which had that very day been taken from the holy table, *and gave it also to those that attended him; which it was neither lawful for him nor them to eat*, nor even the Levites themselves, *but for the priests alone?* Yet in this case, their necessity was judged a sufficient excuse for dispensing with the observance of such a ceremonial institution. (see Lev. xxiv. 6—9.)

Luke VI. 4.

priest,] and did take and eat the shew-bread, and gave also to them that were with him, [which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them] but for the priests alone? [MAT. XII. 4. MARK. II. 26.]

Mat. XII. 5.

Or have ye not read in the law, that by those sacrifices which are appointed for the sabbath-day, and some of them peculiar to it, *the priests* themselves, who minister *in the temple*, are obliged to perform very servile works *on the sabbath-days*, in making up the fires, killing, flaying and dressing the sacrifices, and the like, by which others would be justly reckoned to *profane the sabbath; and* yet, doing it with an immediate reference to the service of God, they *are* accounted *blameless*, and really are so. *Now I say unto you, That there is* [*something*] *greater than the temple here,*[1] and of much more importance than the service of it. My disciples therefore may surely be vindicated on such an occasion as this, when in attendance upon me, in prosecution of my service, they do what is so much less laborious than the offices which you allow there in the priests.

MAT. XII. 5. Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath-days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

6 But I say unto you, That in this place is *one* greater than the temple.

Mark II. 27.

And he said unto them farther on this occasion, *The sabbath was made for* the benefit of *man*, subservient to the rest and relief of his body, as well as to be spent in religious improvement; *and not man for the* observation of the *sabbath*, or of any other ceremonial institution whatsoever.

MARK II. 27. And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath.—[LUKE VI. 5.]

Mat. XII. 7.

But if ye had known the intent of that scripture, Hos. vi. 6. and had considered *what this*

MAT. XII. 7. But if ye had known what

celebrated person than his father, our Lord mentions his name in preference to the other. He was probably present, and, for any thing we certainly know, his aged father might act by his advice in the affair referred to; which if he did, it was exceeding proper to mention him here.

[1] *Something greater than the temple.*] So many manuscripts, with Theophylact, read μειζον, *something greater*, instead of μειζων, *one greater*, (see Dr. Mill in loc.) and in this view the opposition seems so natural that I prefer this reading. Our Lord might perhaps point to *his own body*, the noblest temple of the Deity; (compare John ii. 21. sect. xxiv.) or it might refer to the *work* then going on; but the former sense is much more natural.

this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

meaneth, "*I require mercy and not sacrifice*;[g] "that is, I always prefer acts of charity to mat- "ters of positive institution, when in any in- "stance they interfere with each other;"[h] *you would not have condemned the innocent*, as you have now done, merely for rubbing out a handful of corn to refresh them in my service. SECT. XLIX. Mat. XII. 7.

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath-day. [MARK II. 28. LUKE VI. 5.]

You are therefore, on the whole, greatly to blame, to censure them; and would be so, if they had only my dispensation for what they do, and were defended by no farther arguments; *for the Son of man* is a person of so great dignity and authority, that he indeed *is Lord*[i] *even of the sabbath* [*itself*];[k] and he may hereafter give you far more surprising instances of his power over it. 8

[g] *I require mercy and not sacrifice.*] So Θελω evidently signifies, when it expresses the *will* of a superior; and this the original Hebrew word imports, which seems here to answer to that modern phrase used by princes, Such is our pleasure.

[h] I always prefer acts of charity, &c.] I must here repeat a very obvious remark, because the sense of so many important scriptures depends upon it, viz. that according to the genius of the Hebrew language, one thing seems to be *forbidden*, and another *commanded*, when the meaning only is, that the latter is *greatly to be preferred* to the former. The text before us is a remarkable instance of this; as likewise Joel ii. 13; Mat. vi. 19, 20. John vi. 27; Luke xii. 4, 5; and Col. iii 2. And it is evident, that Gen. xlv 8; Exod. xvi. 8; John v. 30; vii. 19. and many more passages are to be expounded in the same comparative sense.—A late ingenious writer says, "Our Lord does not compare *moral* and "*positive* duties together here, but only "the commandments of men with the "commandments of God." But it is plain, the series of our Lord's arguments here is intended to prove, that *circumstances of necessity* dispense with some *ceremonial observance*, which were in the general commanded by God, and manifestly goes upon this foundation, that ceremonial institutions being the means of religion, if circumstances occurred in which they interfered with the end of it, they were suspended of course; and when this is the case, the conscience of particular persons is to judge as in the sight of God.

[i] *For the Son of man is Lord*, &c.] The author of the new translation renders it in Matthew, *The sabbath is subservient to man*; though he paraphrases it as it stands in Mark, *The Son of man has a power of dispensing with the law of the sabbath*; which is undoubtedly the true sense: for I cannot find that *the Son of man* does, in the New Testament, signify any one but Christ; and were the words (which are exactly the same,) to be translated in Mark as he has rendered them in Matthew, they would be a mere repetition of ver. 27, *The sabbath was made for man*, &c.—It is worthy of our notice, that Matthew introduces these words with γαρ, *for*, and Mark with ωστε, *therefore*, or *so that*; and both connections may be justified. Yet as it is hardly to be imagined, *both* were equally intended, I look upon this to be a considerable proof, that the sacred writers were not always critically exact in the use of their particles; a remark which I apprehend to be of great importance, both for clearing their sense and vindicating their character. Whoever considers the ambiguity of many of those Hebrew particles, which correspond to the Greek, will find little reason to wonder at it. Compare Luke xi. 36. sect. lxiv. and note [d] there.

[k] *Even of the sabbath itself*; και του σαββατου.] This certainly implies, that the sabbath was an institution of great and distinguished importance; and may perhaps also refer to that signal authority, which Christ by the ministry of his apostles should exert over it, in changing it from the *seventh* to the *first day of the week*.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. XLIX. WITH pleasure we observe the zeal which these attendants of *Christ* express, who chose on a *sacred festival* to expose themselves *to hunger* as well as toil, rather than they would lose the benefit of his instructions, which, like the heavenly *manna* on the day preceding the *sabbath*, were *then* poured out in a *double* plenty. But what numerous auditory is so candid as to contain none who come, like these *Pharisees*, with a desire to cavil rather than to learn! The malignity of *their temper* sufficiently appeared in taking *exception* at so small a circumstance: *hypocrites* that could thus *strain at a gnat* and yet *swallow a camel*, (Mat. xxiii. 24,) scrupling to *rub out a few grains of corn*, while they sought to *devour widows' houses*, and were, under this grave *mask* of the strictest piety, *inwardly full of rapine and all wickedness!* (Luke xx. 47, and xi. 39.)

Mat. XII. 1. 2.

6, 8 Let us attend to the *apology Christ* makes for *his disciples*. It speaks his own *authority*, as *greater than the temple*, and *Lord of the sabbath:* and well might he, *in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*, without the least presumption, use such language as this. It likewise declares much of the *genius of his religion*, which deals not in *forms* and *ceremonies*, and *dispenses* even with *rituals* of a Divine appointment, when *humanity* and *benevolence* interfere with the observance of them.

7 Since *God will have mercy rather than sacrifice*, let us abhor the perverseness and wickedness of those who sacrifice *mercy* itself, not merely to *ceremonies* of a *Divine original* but to their own arbitrary inventions, superstitious dreams, and precarious though confident determinations. Let us practise habitual *caution* and *candour*, lest, before we are aware, we *condemn the innocent* and the pious, and become guilty of what is much more displeasing in the sight of God than the faults which a peevish and censorious temper may fancy it discovers in our brethren.

SECT. L.

Christ, on a following sabbath, cures a man whose hand was withered; and vindicates that action from the cavils of the Pharisees. Luke VI. 6—11. Mat. XII. 9—15. Mark III. 1—7.

LUKE VI. 6

SECT. L. Luke VI. 6. WE have just mentioned an instance of the Pharisees cavilling at a very innocent action of the disciples; we shall *now* proceed to another, in which they charged our Lord himself with the violation of the same sacred rest, in a yet more malicious and unreasonable manner.

LUKE VI. 6. AND it came to pass also, [when

SECT. L.

Luke VI. 6.

he was departed thence,] on another sabbath, that he entered [MARK again] into the synagogue, and taught: and [behold,] there was a man [MARK there,] whose right hand was withered. [MAT. XII. 9, 10. MARK III. 1.]

For *it came to pass also, when he was departed from thence*,[a] (that is, from the town in whose neighbouring fields they had rubbed out the ears of corn,) *that on another sabbath he entered again*, as he was used to do, *into the synagogue*, in some other city which lay in his way through Galilee, *and taught* his heavenly doctrine there. *And behold*, a remarkable circumstance occurred; for *there was a man present whose right hand was withered*, the nerves and sinews of it being so shrunk up, that it was entirely useless.

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the sabbath day, that they might find an accusation against him. [MARK III. 2.]

And the scribes and Pharisees, who were there also present with him, *watched him*, to observe *whether he would* again *heal on the sabbath-day*; *that they might find* some new matter for *an accusation against him*, having succeeded so ill in the former attempt, and plainly perceiving that his reputation grew more and more among the people. 7

8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose and stood forth. [MARK III. 3.]

But when the synagogue-worship was dispatched, and our Lord's sermon was also concluded; *he, knowing* the malignity and wickedness of *their thoughts* and views, instead of being discouraged by the design they had against him, *said to the man who had the withered hand*, *Rise up* from thy seat, *and stand in the midst* of the assembly: *and he* cheerfully *arose and stood* in the most conspicuous part of the synagogue, hoping to receive the favour of a cure. 8

MAT. XII. 10— And they asked him, saying, is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-days?

And as the Pharisees saw what Jesus intended, *they asked him, saying, Is it* then to be taken for granted, that it is *lawful to cure on sabbath-days*, as well as at other times? And they put the question in that general form,[b] on MAT. XII. 10

[a] *When he was departed from thence.*] There can be no doubt as to the connection of this story with the preceding, in which all the evangelists agree; and indeed, had not Luke told us it was *on another sabbath*, the words of Matthew would have led us to imagine it had been the *same day*. Perhaps he might spend most of the week in the town, to which the fields mentioned above belonged.—Beza's favourite manuscript, now at Cambridge, as well as one of Stephens's, adds the following words in Luke, immediately before this story: *The same day, seeing a certain man at work on the sabbath, he said to him, O man, if thou knowest what thou doest, thou art happy; but if thou dost not know it, thou art cursed, and a transgressor of the law.* This is undoubtedly *a spurious addition*; for had the Pharisees heard anything like this from Christ, they would have followed him no farther, and observed him no more, to find matter even of *capital accusation* against him. And indeed it goes on a very false supposition, that the *ceremonial law* was already abrogated.

[b] *They put the question in that general form.*] The word ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ is very extensive, and properly includes all the

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purpose *that they might* have an opportunity to *accuse him*, and not from any desire of instruction. *And he said to them*, in reply to
Mat. XII. 11. that ensnaring question, *What man is there of you*, in all this assembly, *who, if ye have but one sheep, that on the sabbath-day should fall into a pit*,[c] and be in danger of perishing there, *would not lay hold of it* without delay, *and* make no scruple of attempting presently to *raise it up* from thence, though it would be a work
12 of some labour and difficulty? *Now* I leave it to your own consciences to reflect, *how much is a man better than a sheep? So that* you must, on your own principles, allow that *it is lawful to do well*, and to perform the lovely acts of charity and mercy[d] even *on sabbath-days:* and you must own, for instance, that if a man should fall into a pit, it would be lawful on that day to pull him out; and consequently too, it must be lawful if he labours under a disease, to apply any proper remedies for his cure; much more then must it be so, to cure a person, without any laborious application, merely by speaking a word.

bath-days? that they might accuse him.

11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out?

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath-days.

Luke VI. 9. *Then Jesus said* farther *to them*, To end the controversy in a few words, *I will ask you one thing* more; *Is it lawful to do good on sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy*, [*and*] even *kill* the innocent? thereby secretly referring to the purpose of destroying his life,[e] which, while they were thus scrupulous about

Luke VI. 9. Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing: Is it lawful on the sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to [kill, *and*] destroy *it*? Mark III. 4.]

care, *labour*, and *attendance*, which the case of any distempered or wounded person can require; as I apprehend our English word *cure* also does; though, through the poverty of our language, we are forced to apply it to those miraculous effects which were so instantaneously produced by the healing word of our blessed Redeemer.—What Syriac word they might use I know not; but it is plain the question is put in very *general terms*, which best favoured their base purpose of founding an *accusation* on our Lord's answer.

[c] *If ye have but one sheep that should fall into a pit.*] The common version is more literal; but that which I have given plainly suits our English idiom better, and appears to me perfectly faithful: for the stress of the thought cannot lie on supposing a man to have *but one sheep* in all: but in this, that *one only fell into the pit*, yet for the comparitively small value of *that one*, he would not scruple to undertake the *labour* of helping it out *on the sabbath*.

[d] *To do well*, and to perform the lovely acts of charity and mercy.] This is the meaning of that phrase, καλως ποιειν; in the use of which the Evangelist might intimate an appeal to some remainders of a moral sense, distinguishing the natural beauty of such actions, which these worst of men could not totally eradicate.

[e] Secretly referring to the purpose of destroying his life.] I appeal to every reader of taste, whether there be not another kind of spirit in these words, on this supposition of such a reference, than we could find in them, by any forced attempt to prove, that *not to have cured a withered hand* in these circumstances

SECT. L. Mark III. 4.

the observation of the sabbath, they were even then forming in their hearts. *But they were silent;* being convinced in their own minds of the reasonableness of what he said, and stung with secret remorse of conscience, yet unwilling to confess what they saw and felt.

Mark III. 4. But they held their peace.

5 And when he had looked round about [Luke, upon them all] with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. [Mat. XII. 13.—Luke VI. 10.]

5 *And when he had looked round upon them all with* a just *indignation, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts,* and for that condemnation and ruin which he knew it would bring upon them, as well as for the mischief it might occasion to others, *he says to the man* that laboured under the calamity which was mentioned before, *Stretch forth thine hand. And* accordingly *he stretched it out, and* was not only strengthened for that particular motion of which he was before incapable, but *his hand was* perfectly *restored,* and was *well* and strong *as the other.*

6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him,

6 *And the Pharisees* were so incensed at the affront which they imagined they had received, in our Lord's neglecting their censure, and intimating his knowledge of the evil purposes of their hearts, that they were no longer able to bear the place; but *went out* of the synagogue, *and immediately took counsel* together *with the Herodians,*[f] who, different as their civil and religious notions were from those of the Pharisees, joined with them in their enmity to Christ, and zealously united in a conspiracy *against*

would have been, in a sense, *destroying life.* Such cold and unnatural criticisms have been a great dishonour to scripture, and I persuade myself, the authors of them have not seen whither they tended.

[f] *With the Herodians.*] The Herodians were a sect of men who, so far as we can judge by their name, seem to have distinguished themselves, by their zeal for the family of Herod; whom they might perhaps compliment with the title of the Messiah, though it is plain, that neither Herod himself, nor the generality of the people fell in with this extravagant opinion: (see Mat ii. 1—4.) However from their high regard to Herod, these men would naturally be zealous for the authority of the Romans, by whose means Herod was made and continued *king;* and it is probable, as Dr. Prideaux conjectures, (Connect. Vol. II. part 2, book 5, *ad fin.*) that they might incline to conform to them in some particulars which the law would not allow of; and particularly in the admission of *images,* though not in the *religious,* or rather *idolatrous,* use of them. Herod's attempt to set up a *golden eagle* over the east gate of the temple is well known; (see Joseph. Antiq. lib. xvii. cap 6. (al. 8) § 1—3.) these complaisant courtiers would, no doubt, defend it: and the same temper might discover itself in many other instances. On all these accounts they were most diametrically opposite to the Pharisees; so that the conjunction of their counsels against Christ is a very memorable proof of the keenness of that malice, which could thus cause them to forget so deep a quarrel with each other.

SECT. L.

him, how they might destroy him, either by a public prosecution, or a private assassination. *And they were filled with madness* and rage against him, *and discoursed* over the point at large *with each other*, to determine *what they might do to* prevent the growing reputation of once among the people, and to put a period at *Jesus* to his labours and his life.

how they might destroy him. [MAT. XII. 14.]

LUKE VI. 11. And they were filled with madness, and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

But Jesus knowing [*it*,] that nothing might hinder him from fulfilling his ministry, *withdrew himself from thence*, and went *with his disciples to the sea* of Galilee, on the shore of which he frequently preached to the people.

MAT. XII. 15.—But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence, [with his disciples to the sea.] [MARK III. 7.]

IMPROVEMENT.

What *actions* are so fair and lovely, that *malice* cannot turn them into reproach! What *characters* are so unblemished, what so exemplary, that *uncharitableness* cannot revile and condemn them! While the eyes of distressed *multitudes* were turned to *Christ* as their only Physician and most valuable friend, the eyes of the *Pharisees* are continually *upon him for evil*: and they behold his wondrous *miracles*; not for their own *conviction*, but that they may, if possible, turn them into the means of his *destruction*. So ineffectual are the most obvious and demonstrative *arguments*, till divine grace conquer mens natural aversion to a Redeemer's kingdom, and *captivate* their hearts *to the obedience of faith!*

To have reviled and dishonoured *Christ*, and to have endeavoured to prevent the success of his ministry, had been a daring crime: but these desperate wretches *conspire against his life*; and, different as their principles and interests were, form a transient friendship, to be cemented by his blood. Blessed *Jesus!* well mightest thou say, *Many good works have I shewn you, and for which of them would you* murder *me?* (John x. 32.)

What *reasoning* could be more plain and forcible than this which *our Lord* used? and yet, like *deaf adders*, they *stop their ears*, and harden their hearts against it. Inhuman creatures, that were more concerned for the safety of a *sheep*, than the happiness of a *man!* Yet would to God that unworthy temper had died with them; for surely there are those, even among *professing Christians*, who regard their *cattle* more than even the *souls* committed by Providence to their care, and therefore, no doubt, more than *their own* too!

The *indignation* which *Christ* felt on this occasion, was a just and amiable passion. Happy they, whose anger like his, is only awakened by *sin*, and burns only to destroy that *accursed thing!*

The malice of the *Pharisees* did not restrain the benevolence of our compassionate *Saviour*, nor deprive the poor *patient* of his *cure*. Such let our conduct be! Let us *not be overcome of evil*; let not the most unjust censures, or the most malicious opposition break our spirits, so as to prevent us from doing our duty. If others are *mad* with persecuting rage, let us pity them; and let all their fury against the cause of God, be improved as a motive to excite our most zealous and courageous endeavours for its service. SECT. L. Mat. XII. 18. Luke VI. 11.

SECT. LI.

Christ retiring to the sea side cures great multitudes with such modesty and gentleness, as was agreeable to Isaiah's prophetic description of his conduct. Mark III. 7—12. Mat. XII. 15—21.

MARK III. 7.

AND a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea, [MAT. XII. 15.—]

MARK III. 7.

IT was before observed, that Jesus retired from the synagogue, where he had cured the man that had a withered hand, and went with his disciples to the sea-shore: we now pursue the story,[a] *and* add, that he was there attended by *a great multitude* of people, who *followed him from Galilee, and* even *from Judea; And* particularly *from Jerusalem*, where that extraordinary cure lately wrought at the pool of Bethesda, and that excellent defence with which it was followed, had greatly increased his popularity: nay, there were some, that came yet farther from the south, *and* were *from Idumea*; the natives of which country being long since obliged to become Jews,[b] had many of them seen Jesus at the feasts; *and* others too attended him *from* the eastern regions, which lay *beyond* SECT. LI. Mark III. 7.

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond Jordan, and they about Tyre and 8

[a] We now pursue the story.] The connection of this section with the preceding, both in Matthew and Mark, is express: and I desire the reader would once for all observe, that when I give no reason for placing the sections in the order in which they stand, it is because I am not aware there is any difficulty or controversy about them. And their following each other in the evangelists, though without any express note of exact connection, I always reckon a good reason for continuing that order, unless there be some weighty argument inducing us to change it.

[b] Obliged to become Jews.] That Hyrcanus had obliged them to this, about *an hundred and fifty years before the birth of Christ*, we are assured by the account Josephus gives us, Antiq. lib. xiii. cap. 9. (al. 17.) § 1.

SECT. LI. Mark III. 8.

Jordan: and also *a great multitude* from the western parts, even as far as *from the neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon, having heard what great* and glorious *things he did, came to him.*

9 *And he spoke to his disciples, that a little vessel should be in readiness near him, because of the multitude* that was now flocking around him; *that they might not throng* in upon *him,* in a manner which would have been very inconvenient to him, and would have prevented great numbers of them from seeing and hearing what passed.

10 *For he had healed many, and* [*indeed*] *all* that applied to him; *so that they* eagerly *rushed in upon him,*[c] even *as many as were under any* remarkable *scourge* of God's afflicting hand, *that they might touch him,* and so partake of that healing virtue which went out from him.

11 *And* they who were possessed with *impure spirits, as soon as* ever *they saw him,* though they before were perfect strangers to him, immediately *fell down before him* in a posture of submission and homage; *and* such a terror seized the demons that possessed them, that they *cried out,* with all the appearances of horror and confusion, *saying,* We know that *thou art* the Messiah, *the Son of* the most high *God.*[d]

12 But our Lord preserved the usual modesty of his temper, on these occasions, as well as others; *and,* being desirous to occasion as little disturbance and offence as possible, *he charged them with strictness,* and some appearance of severity,[e] *that they should not make him known:*

Sidon, a great multitude when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

9 And he spake unto his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him, because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

10 For he had healed many [and he healed them a] insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues. [MAT. XII. 15.]

11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

12 And he straitly charged them that they should not

[c] *Rushed in upon him.*] This the phrase ἐπιπίπτειν αὐτῷ, yet more strongly expresses; which signifies, that they were ready to drive each other upon him, so that those nearer him could hardly stand, being pressed forward by those behind.

[d] *Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the most high God.*] The Leicester manuscripts read it, Σὺ εἶ ὁ Θεὸς, υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ; *Thou art God, the Son of God:* which I mention, not that I think the authority of that sufficient to justify a change in the received reading, but only as one remarkable instance among many others which I could easily give, of the negligence with which that manuscript was collated by Dr Mill's correspondent; since this reading, memorable as it is, is omitted by the Doctor. But I hope the world will ere long be favoured with a far more exact account, not only of that manuscript, but of several others much more valuable than that, some quite omitted by Dr. Mill, and others very imperfectly collated. This we are encouraged to expect from the Reverend, accurate, and indefatigable, Mr. Wasse of Ayno, whose obliging readiness to assist me in this work, I do myself the honour of acknowledging with the utmost gratitude.—His death, since the publication of the first edition of this volume, is a calamity to the learned world, long to be lamented.

[e] *He charged them with strictness,* and some appearance of severity.] This we may take to be included in the force of that expression, πολλὰ ἐπιτιμῶν αὐτοῖς.

make him known. [MAT. XII. 16.]

for, intending to visit several of those parts himself, he was unwilling to give an unnecessary alarm to his enemies; and he always chose to avoid every degree of ostentation. SECT. LI. Mark III. 12.

MAT. XII. 17. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

So *that* in him *it might be* evidently seen to be *accomplished which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet*,[f] (Isa. xlii. 1—4.) *saying*, "*Behold* the great Messiah, *my servant whom I have chosen* for the great work of redeeming and saving my people; he is *my Beloved, in whom my* very *soul does* entirely *acquiesce*, as every way qualified to perform it: for *I will put my spirit upon him; and he shall proclaim judgment*, that is, the great law of religion, righteousness, and truth, even *to* the most distant of *the heathen* nations. *He shall not contend* with martial violence, *nor cry out* in a clamorous and turbulent manner; *nor shall any one hear his voice in the streets*, as giving a loud and disquieting alarm: But he shall manage his administration with so much gentleness and sweetness, with so much caution and tenderness, that (as it is proverbially expressed,) *he shall not break* even *a bruised reed* or cane, which snaps asunder immediately when pressed with any considerable weight; *nor* shall he *extinguish* even *the smoking flax*,[g] or the wick of a lamp, which, when it is first beginning to kindle, is put out by every little motion: with such kind and condescending regards to the weakest of his people, and to the first openings and symptoms of a hopeful character, shall he proceed, *till he send forth judgment to victory*,[h] or till he

MAT. XII. 17. 18

18 Behold my Servant whom I have chosen, my Beloved in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

18 19

19 He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

19 20

20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

20

[f] *By Isaiah the prophet.*] I refer the learned reader to Grotius, and Heinsius, for the difference between the original and the quotation here, which chiefly lies in the clause, of *sending forth judgment unto victory*.

[g] *He shall not break a bruised reed, nor extinguish the smoking flax.*] The immense pains Zegerus, and some other commentators have taken, to shew on what accounts either the Pharisees or the multitudes or the Jews or Gentiles, might be compared to *a bruised reed* or *smoking flax*, seem very wide of the purpose. They seem to be only proverbial expressions, to signify a person of a most gentle character, (as I illustrate them above,) and something resemble the proverb among the Spanish Jews to the same purpose; *If such a one were to walk on a pavement of eggs, he would not break them*: (see Pol. Synops. in loc.) To suppose, with Dr. Lightfoot, it signifies he shall not make *so much noise*, as breaking *a bruised reed* does, or pouring water on *smoking flax*, sinks the idea too low.

[h] *Till he send forth judgment to victory.*] Isaiah says *to truth*; and we may take the words to signify, *till he make* the cause of *righteousness* and *truth* completely *victorious*; or, *till* at length *he take a righteous* and speedy *vengeance* on the Jews for rejecting him, to verify and fulfil the *truth* of his predictions.—I have expres-

SECT. LI.

"make his righteous cause gloriously triumphant over all opposition. *And* this gentle and gracious administration shall charm mankind in so sensible and irresistible a manner, that *the Gentiles shall confide in his* illustrious *name*;[1] and distant, yea barbarous nations, shall seek their refuge and salvation in his grace; though Israel may ungratefully reject him, and therefore be justly abandoned by God."

Mark XII. 21.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

IMPROVEMENT.

SURELY *face* does not more exactly *answer to face in water*, than the character of *Christ* drawn by the *prophet*, to his temper and conduct as described by the *evangelists*. How should *Zion rejoice*, and the *daughter of Jerusalem shout*, that such a *King cometh unto her, meek and having salvation!* (Zech. ix. 9.) Let us with pleasure trace his *gentle administration*, and with a cheerful confidence commit our souls to so kind, and so faithful a hand: far from *breaking*, he will strengthen the *bruised reed*; far from *quenching the smoking flax*, he will rather blow it up into a flame.

Mat. XI. 16.

20

How well does it become the *disciples of Christ*, and especially how well does it become his *ministers*, to imitate what was so amiable in their *Lord*, and not to *despise the day of small things!* Let us not *strive nor cry*; but, laying aside all unnecessary contentions and angry debates, let us *receive one another* as *Christ hath received us*, (Rom. xv. 7.) and, avoiding all vain *ostentation*, let us silently and meekly attend, each of us, to the discharge of his proper office. So may we hope, that the cause of religion will go on successfully around us, and that *righteousness* will in due time be *brought forth to* complete *victory* over all opposition, and, by its own genuine influences, be happily *established in the earth*.

19

Mat. XII. 20.

21 *The Gentiles trust in a Redeemer's name*, and the *British isles* are numbered among those, that *wait for his law*. May our souls with humble submission bow themselves to receive it, and observe it with such faithful care and obedient regards,

sed it in a manner which may suit either; but I think the former much preferable, since then the words describe the general character of Christ's administration in all ages, and especially as it best agrees with the sense of the original, *He shall bring forth judgment unto truth; He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set*, or established, *judgment in the earth*: which phrases explain each other, and the sense of each is abridged here.

[1] *And the Gentiles shall confide in his name.*] Isaiah's saying, chap. xlii. 4. *The isles shall wait for his law*, is illustrated and explained by this correspondent phrase, which Matthew uses.

that our example, wherever it is seen, may promote the reception of it, among those that as yet are strangers to it!

SECT. LII.

Our Lord having spent the night in prayer on a mountain, in the morning chuses the twelve apostles; and then comes down to the multitude assembled in the plain, and performs a great number of miracles among them. Luke VI. 12—19. Mark III. 13—19.

LUKE VI. 12.

AND it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.—[MARK III. 13.]

AND it came to pass in those days[a] of his teaching near the sea of Galilee, *that* Jesus, seeing the general notice which was taken of his appearance, and the inclination which multitudes had to be farther informed concerning him, determined to chuse a number of persons, who should assist and succeed him in his ministerial work. And as the office to which he intended to assign them, was of so great importance, even to the remotest ages; previous to the choice of them *he went forth to a* neighbouring *mountain to pray; and* his heart was so much enlarged on this momentous occasion, that, notwithstanding all the labours of the preceding day, he *continued all night* at his devotions, *in an oratory* [*devoted to the service*] *of God*,[b] where he had some opportunity of being sheltered by the trees which were planted round it.

SECT. LII. Luke VI. 12.

13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples, [whom he

And when it was day, early in the morning, 13 *he called his disciples to him*, [*even*] *those whom*

[a] *In those days.*] There can be no doubt of the place of this section, since this choice of the twelve apostles is mentioned both by Mark and Luke just in this connection; and Matthew does not mention it at all, till he comes to speak of the mission of the twelve, which is plainly a different thing, and happened some time after. Compare Luke ix. 1, 2. with Mat. x. 1—5. sect. lxxiv.

[b] *In an oratory* [*devoted to the service*] *of God*, εν τη προσευχη του Θεου.] This is so singular an expression, that I cannot agree with our translation; but rather conclude with Drusius, Prideaux, Whitby, Hammond, and many other good critics, that we are to understand it of an *oratory*, or *proseucha*, or *prayer-house*, as Dr. Watts chuses to render it, (in his late ingenious discourse on the Holiness of Places, p. 111.) and as the word seems also to be used, Acts xvi. 13. (See Hammond, in loc.) Descriptions of these places may be found in most writers of Jewish Antiquities, and in none that I know of, better than in Calmet, (at the word *Proseucha*,) and in Prideaux's Connection, Vol. I p. 387—389. It is well known, they were open at the top, and planted round with trees; as well as often situate by the side of seas or rivers, as was probably the case here. I did not chuse, with Dr. Whitby, to render it *in God's house of prayer*, that phrase having been so peculiarly appropriated to the *temple*. See Mat. xxi. 13.

SECT. LII.

he pleased, (compare John xv. 16.) *and they* cheerfully *came to him* upon his summons: *and out of them he chose* [*and*] *constituted twelve*,[c] Luke VI. 13. *whom he also named* his *apostles*, or envoys; a name which well expressed the office for which they were designed: these he now fixed upon, *that* for some time *they should* continually *be with him*, not only to attend upon his public ministry, but to enjoy the benefit of his private conversation; that he might furnish them the better for the great work in which they were to be employed; *and that* at length, after suitable preparation, *he might* with more advantage, *send them abroad to preach* his gospel, and thereby make way for his own visits to some more distant parts, where he had not yet been.

would; and they came unto him:] and of them he chose[*and* ordained] twelve, whom also he named apostles; [that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach;] [MARK III. 13, 14.]

Mark III. 12. *And to* enable them the more effectually to do it, he determined that they should then *have power to heal distempers, and to cast out demons* from those unhappy people who were possessed by them; well knowing, such endowments would command a regard, notwithstanding the meanness of their appearance.

MARK III. 15. And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.

16 *And* the twelve persons who were so signally honoured by him, and whose names (excepting that of Judas Iscariot,) will be ever venerable in the Christian church, as being, next to Christ, the great foundations of it, (Eph. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14.) were these: *Simon*, whom (it has been observed before, John i. 42, p. 130.) *he sirnamed Peter*,[d] that is, a rock, on account of his remarkable steadiness and intrepidity of temper, (see Isa. l. 7.) as well as the peculiar 17 use to be made of him: *And James* [*the son*] *of Zebedee*, the fisherman; *and John* the beloved disciple, who was *the brother of James*: *and*

16 And Simon he sirnamed Peter; [LUKE VI. 14.—]

17 And James *the son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; (and he sir-

[c] *Constituted twelve.*] So I chuse to render ἐποίησε, rather than *ordained; ordination to the ministry*, carrying along with it an idea by no means suiting what passed now, which was so long before their entering on the office. The word is used elsewhere, for *appointing to an office*; 1 Sam. xii. 6. Gr. and Heb. iii. 2. —It is probable our Lord chose twelve apostles in reference to the twelve tribes of Israel, (see Mat. xix. 28; Luke xxii. 30; Rev. xxi. 12, 14; and compare Exod. xxiv. 4; Deut. i. 23; and Josh. iv. 2, 3.) and therefore care was taken, on the death of Judas, to chuse another to make up the number. (Acts i. 21, 22, 26.) Which seems to have been a piece of respect paid to the Jews, previous to the grand offer of the gospel to them; whereas when they had generally rejected it, two more, Paul and Barnabas, were added without any regard to the particular number of *twelve*.

[d] *He sirnamed Peter.*] *To sirname*, here plainly signifies to give an *additional name*; ἐπέθηκε τῷ Σίμωνι ὄνομα Πέτρον.

named them Boanerges which is, The Sons of Thunder;) [Luke VI. 14.—]

he surnamed them Boanerges, which signifies, Sons of Thunder:[e] thereby intimating, with what victorious and resistless power they should bear down all opposition, and with divine eloquence and mighty miracles, confound the enemies of his gospel: SECT. LII. Mark III. 17.

18 And Andrew and Philip and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James *the son* of Alpheus and Thaddeus, [*or Judas the brother* of James,] and Simon the Canaanite, [called Zelotes;] —[Luke VI. 14, 15, 16.—]

18 first acquaintance with Christ we were before informed; (John i. 40, 43.) *and Bartholomew*; *and Matthew*, or Levi, who had lately been called from the infamous employment of a publican; (Mat. ix. 9. p. 260.) *and Thomas*, who was also called Didymus, as having a twin brother; *and James* [*the son*] *of Alpheus*, called James the less; (Mark xv. 40.) *and* Lebbeus, whose sir-name was *Thaddeus*, and who was [*also called*] *Judas*, or Jude, [*the brother*] *of James*;[f] *and Simon the Canaanite, called* also *Zelotes*,[g] or the Zealot, as having before professed a distinguishing zeal for the law: *And*,

19 And Judas Iscariot, [which also was the traitor,]

19 worthy of being mentioned in the last place, or rather unworthy of being mentioned at all, otherwise than with the greatest abhorrence, was *Judas Iscariot*, or a man of Carioth, (Josh. xv. 25.) that infamous abandoned wretch, *who also was the traitor, that* afterwards was so ungrate-

[e] *Boanerges, which signifies, sons of thunder.*] As it stands in this form, it is plainly a corruption of Benei Regish. Considering the remarkable gentleness of John's temper, and manner of writing, it is more reasonable to interpret this title as in the paraphrase, than to refer it to any thing peculiarly *awful* or *awakening*, in their manner of address beyond what was to be found in the other apostles.

[f] Lebbeus, whose sirname was *Thaddeus*, and who was *also called Judas*, or Jude *the brother of James*.] That this person had all these names, appears from comparing the catalogues given us in the places before us, and in Mat. x. 2—4. and Acts i. 13. Lebbeus being derived from Leb, which signifies the *heart*, and Thaddeus probably from Thadd, a Syro-Chaldaic word, which, as some critics tell us signifies *the breast*, seem equivalent names, and may signify *the hearty Judas* perhaps to distinguish him from that other Judas whose faithless *breast* and foul *heart* had brought a kind of infamy on the name; so that neither Matthew nor Mark use it when speaking of this apostle; and John takes particular care to prevent the confusion which might arise from the ambiguity of it. John xiv. 22.

[g] *Simon the Canaanite, called also Zelotes.*] It is matter of some doubt with me, whether he was called *the Canaanite*, as being a native of Cana in Galilee, as some have thought; or whether it be derived, as Dr. Hammond thinks, from the Hebrew Kanad, and signifies the same with *Zelotes*. But though we have many instances of extraordinary zeal in Phinehas, Elijah, the Maccabees, &c. and read in ancient Jewish writers of the *judgment of zeal* by which Stephen was murdered, Paul assaulted, &c. yet I cannot find any sect of men, distinguished by that name, till mentioned by Josephus (Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 3. (al. 5.) § 9), a little before the destruction of Jerusalem. If Simon had the additional name of *Zelotes* given him on account of his personal zeal for the law, (which is possible,) he might probably be a Pharisee: but Mr. Fleming's conjecture, that he was the *father of Judas Iscariot*, who is called *the son of Simon*, (John xii. 4.) seems very precarious, considering how common the name of Simon was. See Fleming's Christology, Vol. II. p. 167.

SECT. LII.

ful to his Lord, that he *even betrayed him*[b] into the hands of his bloody enemies: he had professed himself, with secular and worldly views, a disciple of Christ; and though our Lord well knew him, yet, as his character was free from any visible ground of suspicion, in order to accomplish what was delivered in the sacred oracles, he was pleased to invest him with this holy office, and to place him among his apostles: (Compare John xiii. 18.)

Mark III. 19. which also betrayed him.— [Luke VI. —16.]

Luke VI. 17. *And*, after he had acquainted these twelve persons with his design, and had given them such private instructions as he judged convenient, to render their attendance upon him subservient to the execution of their important office, *he came down* from the mountain *with them, and stood in the* neighbouring *plain: and* as the morning was now pretty far advanced, *the crowd of his disciples* [*gathered round him;*] *and* besides those that had followed him for some time, and were now persuaded of his divine mission, there was also still waiting upon him (as we observed above, Mark iii. 7, 8, p. 280.) *a great multitude of people from all* parts of *Judea, and* particularly from *Jerusalem, and* even *from the shore of Tyre and Sidon*, which lay on the Mediterranean sea; *who came to hear him, and to*

Luke VI. 17. And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

18 *be healed of their diseases: And they* also *who were infested with unclean* and wicked *spirits*,[i] made their application to him; *and they were cured* of the terrible disorders which those

18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed.

19 malignant beings occasioned. *And the whole multitude* of these unhappy people *endeavoured* at least *to touch him; for* so extraordinary were the miracles of this day, that in some instances, where our Lord did not so much as take any

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him; for there

[b] *That even betrayed him.*] It is plain that καὶ has great force here, if it be rendered *even*; or else it seems a mere expletive.

[i] *Unclean spirits.*] It seems to me an excessive refinement in the learned editors of the Prussian Testament, to distinguish, (as they do in their note on Mat. x. 1.) *unclean spirits*, from other *evil spirits*, which might possess men; supposing the word only to signify such kind of *spirits* as drove men to *dwell among the tombs*, by which they became *ceremonially unclean*. How little it can be supported from Luke iv. 33, see the note there, p. 199. It is evident unclean and evil spirits are generally used as nearly synonymous terms, referring to the moral impurity and malignity of their natures. Compare Mat. xii. 43; Luke xi. 24, and Rev. xvi. 13, 14.

went virtue out of him, and healed them all.

apparent notice of the case, yet *there went* a divine, though secret, *virtue out of him, and* wrought so powerfully on those that touched him, that it *healed them all*, how desperate soever their distempers were. SECT. LII. Luke VI. 19.

IMPROVEMENT.

WHEN we consider how much the church in all ages has been indebted to the labours of *the apostles*, and how much we ourselves owe to them, we shall see great reason of thankfulness to our wise and gracious Master, who was pleased to assign this work to his servants, and so eminently to qualify them for it. It is observable, that *before he sent them forth*, he chose them to *be with him*, in a more constant attendance on his person and ministry. May all who succeed them as *preachers of the gospel*, be such as have intimately *known Christ* themselves, and have been accustomed to spiritual converse *with him*; that they may with the greater ability, zeal, and efficacy, recommend him to others! Luke vi. 13. Mark iii. 14.

We may assure ourselves, that these, his future *ministers*, had no inconsiderable share in those *petitions* in which, with unabating fervour and intenseness of devotion, *our Redeemer* spent this memorable *night*. And if we have any regard for the support of religion in the rising age, let us likewise be earnestly *praying*, both for them that are already *in the ministry*, and for such as are *preparing for it*. This surely ought to be the frequent care, not only of those who have the *tremendous charge of educating such*, as are ere long to be intrusted with the honour of the gospel, and the care of souls, but of those who are now struggling with the glorious labours and trials of that important office, and even of all those *private Christians*, who cordially love the interest of their Master, and wish the salvation of their fellow-creatures. Luke vi. 12.

Let us unite our cries to him, who has engaged to be *always with his church even to the end of the world*, and say, "Light "up, *O Lord*, a brighter and a stronger flame in the lamps of "thy sanctuary! Polish these arrows of thy quiver, that they "may pierce deep into the consciences of men! Let thy *priests* "*be clothed with salvation*, that thy *saints* may *shout aloud* "*for joy!* And pour forth upon them so plenteous an *unction* "of thine *Holy Spirit*, that the odours of thy grace may by "their means be diffused around, throughout all thy tabernacles; like that of the fragrant oil, which was poured on *the* "*head of Aaron*, in such rich abundance, that it not only *ran* "*down on his beard*, but reached even *to the skirts of his gar*"*ments!* Amen, and Amen."

SECT. LIII.

Christ, in the audience of his new-chosen disciples, and of the multitude, repeats in the plain many remarkable passages of his sermon before delivered on the mount. Luke VI. 20—36.

LUKE VI. 20.

SECT. LIII. Luke VI. 20. *AND* [*Jesus*] *lifting up his eyes on his disciples*, who surrounded him, and more especially directing them to his apostles whom he had lately chosen, *said* unto them,[a] *Happy are you* who are enriched with divine knowledge and grace, though your circumstances in this world are *poor* and mean; *for the kingdom of God*, in all its transcendent and eternal glories, *is yours*, and you are hastening on to the full
21 possession of it. *Happy are you who are now hungry* and destitute of all the comfortable accommodations of life, if you feel that nobler appetite by which the religious soul longs after improvements in holiness;[b] *for you shall* ere long *be filled* with the most substantial and valuable blessings. *Happy are you who now mourn* under a sense of sin, or under that wholesome discipline of affliction by which God reduces his wandering children, and trains them up to superior virtue; *for* all your sorrow shall pass away

LUKE VI. 20. AND he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed *be* ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed *are* ye that hunger now; for ye shall be filled. Blessed *are* ye that weep now; for ye shall laugh.

[a] *Said* unto them.] Hardly any thing that I have observed in the common harmonies surprises me more, than that so many of them make this discourse to be the very *sermon on the mount* recorded at large by Matthew in his fifth sixth, and seventh chapters. *That* was delivered by *Christ, sitting on a mountain*; (Mat. v. 1.) *this*, (as it seems from ver. 17.) *standing* in a plain; and, which weighs yet much more with me, there is such a *difference* in the expression, when the parallel passages come to be compared, that it seems evident, the evangelists have not related it exactly, if they meant to give us *the same*. On the other hand, there appears not the least difficulty in supposing, that Christ might here repeat a part of what he had delivered some months before to another auditory, and probably at some greater distance than just in the same neighbourhood. (See note [b] on Luke v. 12, p. 253, and note [b] on Mat. v. 1, p. 208.) For it is plain from other instances, that this is nothing more than what he often had occasion to do. (Compare Mat. ix. 32—34, with Mat. xii. 22—24, and xvi. 21, with xvii. 22, 23, and xx. 17—19.) And indeed, since it is certain from Mat. vii. 28, 29, that what that evangelist has recorded as the *sermon on the mount* was all delivered *at once*; they who suppose *this* the *very same*, must grant, that great part of it was repeated at different times, and on different occasions. (See note [e] on Mat. vii. 28, p. 251.) Dr. Whitby and Mr. Blair agree with me in this account of the matter, chiefly on the reasons I have here assigned.

[b] *Who are now hungry*—If you feel that nobler appetite, &c.] Compare note [g] on Mat. v. 6, p. 209. And let it be observed in general, that the sense of the more dubious expressions in this discourse, may be much illustrated by comparing parallel passages in the sermon on the mount; to which I have accordingly referred, not judging it necessary to repeat in the notes here, what I had said there.

SECT. LIII.

like a dream, and *you shall* ere long *laugh* and rejoice in a complete deliverance from it. (See Mat. v. 4.) *Happy are you when men shall hate you, and* persecute you; *when they shall separate you* [*from their assemblies,*[e]] as unworthy of communion with them; *and shall reproach you* in their private conversation, *and cast out your names as* infamously *evil* in their public acts of civil or ecclesiastical judgment, *on account of* your professed adherence to *the Son of man,* (see John ix. 22—34.) for that glorious and sacred person is able abundantly to repay all you can suffer for him: And therefore, far from being dismayed and overwhelmed with trouble and distress at such abuses and assaults, *be glad in that day, and* with holy alacrity even *leap for joy; for, behold, your reward in heaven is great* in proportion to your sufferings on earth: *For thus their fathers did to the prophets* of old, who now are in seats of distinguished glory. (See Mat. v. 11, 12.)

Luke VI. 22.

22 Blessed *are* ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company,* and shall reproach *you,* and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake:

23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy; for behold, your reward *is* great in heaven: for in the like manner did their Fathers unto the prophets.

23

But there is, generally speaking,[d] cause to denounce a *wo to you who are rich; for* so ensnaring are the circumstances in which you are placed, that it is much to be feared *you have* already *received* all *your consolation,* (compare Luke xvi. 25.) and will be so taken up with the transient pleasures of time, as to forget and forfeit everlasting blessedness. There is generally reason to say, *Wo unto you who are* now *filled* to the full, and pampered with all the most luxurious dainties! *for you shall* ere long *suffer hunger,* and fall into a state of indigence and misery, aggravated by all the plenty which you have enjoyed and abused. *Wo unto you who* spend your lives in mirth and gaiety, and are so vain as *now* to *laugh* off every solemn and awful thought! *for you* have reason to expect a portion in those doleful regions where, without intermission and without end, you *shall mourn and lament.* And again, I may generally say, in so corrupt an age as this, *Wo unto*

24

24 But wo unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

25

25 Wo unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Wo unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

26

26 Wo unto you,

[e] *Separate you from their assemblies.*] Grotius's excellent note on this clause well deserves a most attentive reading; containing a most learned dissertation on the various kinds of excommunication among the Jews.

[d] Generally speaking.] Compare Mat. xix. 23, 24. It is most evident, that such expressions as these in scripture are to be taken with some limitations, otherwise, they would be contrary to fact in some instances.

SECT. LIII.

Luke VI. 26.

you when all men speak well of you! for such universal applause is seldom to be gained without sinful compliances; and *thus did their fathers to the false prophets* of old, who soothed them in their idolatries and other crimes, with smooth addresses, and vain assurances of security and happiness.

when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

27 You, my disciples, if you would approve your fidelity to God and to me, must act in a very different manner, by which you will certainly expose yourselves to hatred and persecution: *But I say unto you*, and to all *that hear* me this day, Far from entertaining sentiments of malice and purposes of revenge, *love* even *your enemies*, and *do good to them that hate you:*

27 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies; do good to them which hate you?

28 *Bless them that* in the malignity of their hearts revile and *curse you; and* cordially and fervently *pray for them that* most *spitefully* harass and *abuse you.* (See Mat. v. 44.)

28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

29 *And*, as ever you would attain to such exalted degrees of fortitude and goodness, accustom yourselves patiently to bear the common injuries of life, which a false sense of honour and interest renders so much more intolerable than they really are. *If*, for instance, *a man smite thee on the* [*one*] *cheek*, rather than return the blow, *offer also the other to him; and if he take away thy mantle, do not* by violence attempt to *hinder him* [*from taking*] *also thy vest.* (See the notes on Mat. v. 39, p. 223, 224.)

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek, offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not *to take thy* coat also.

30 I would also charge it upon you to labour after a diffusive liberality, as well as exemplary meekness: be ready then to *give to every one that asketh thee* for an alms, where thou hast reason to believe it is charity to do it; *and from him that taketh away thy possessions* in an injurious manner, *do not* immediately *demand them back* in the forms of law, but rather endeavour by gentler methods to reduce the offender to reason.

30 Give to every man that asketh of thee, and of him that taketh away thy goods, ask *them* not again.

31 *And* do not by any means imagine, that the injuries you receive from others will cancel the bonds of common humanity to them; but *as you would* reasonably desire *that men should do to you, do you also in like manner to them*, and by putting yourselves, as it were, in their places, endeavour to form your minds to an impartial judgment. (See note on Mat. vii. 12, p. 245.)

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

SECT. LIII.

Luke VI. 32.

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

And indeed *if you* only *love them that love you, what* great *thanks are due to you* upon that account? *For* there are some sentiments of gratitude common *even* to the worst of men, which incline the most scandalous *sinners* to *love those that love them*, and to profess an affectionate regard for those by whom they have been treated with respect and kindness.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

And if you do good offices only *to them that are your benefactors, what* mighty *thanks are due to you* for that? *For even* the most infamous *sinners*, either from instinct, or from mere self-love, may often be observed to *do the same*. (Compare Mat. v. 46, 47, p. 226.)

34 And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

And if you lend only *to them from whom you hope to receive*, and that, perhaps, with considerable advantage to yourselves, what favour do you shew in that, or *what* extraordinary *thanks are due to you* on that account? *For even* the greatest *sinners lend to* other *sinners* like themselves, *that*, when there is occasion, *they may receive the like* assistance in return from them.

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil.

But I exhort you to *love your enemies, and do good, and lend* in cases of great necessity, even *when you can hope for nothing again*:[e] *and so your reward* in heaven *will be great, and you will* appear to *be the sons of the most High* God; *for* in the course of his daily providence *he is kind to the ungrateful and evil*, causing the undeserved benefits of the sun and rain to descend upon them, and filling their insensible hearts with food and gladness. (Compare Mat. v. 44, 45, and Acts xiv. 17.)

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

Be ye therefore merciful, as he *also* whom you call *your* heavenly *Father is merciful*: and unto whom indeed you cannot stand related as his children, if you have no concern to imitate and to obey him. (Compare Mat. v. 48, p. 226.)

IMPROVEMENT.

How necessary is it, that our forgetful hearts should have *line upon line, and precept upon precept*? If *Christ* did not think it

Luke vi. 20.

[e] *When you can hope for nothing again.*] I cannot think (as De Dieu and some others, have done agreeable to the Syriac and Arabic versions,) that μηδὲν ἀπελπίζοντες should be rendered *causing none to despair*; since neither the phrase itself, nor the opposition in which it stands to ver. 34, will admit such an interpretation. See Dr. Whitby's note here.

SECT. LIII. improper to *repeat this discourse*, surely it will not be needless for us to *renew our attention* to it. Oh that every word of it were *engraven on our hearts as with the point of a diamond*, that we might learn, in spite of all the foolish wisdom of this world, to form ourselves on these maxims, as the surest guide to present and to eternal felicity!

Luke vi. 21—26. *Our Lord* again pronounces the *poor* and the *hungry*, the *mournful* and the *persecuted*, *happy*; and represents those as *miserable* who are *rich* and *full*, *joyous* and *applauded*: not that this is universally the case; but because prosperous circumstances are so frequently a sweet poison, and affliction a healing though bitter medicine. Let the thought reconcile us to *adversity*; and awaken our caution when the *world smiles* upon us; when a *plentiful table* is spread before us, and our *cup runneth over*; when our *spirits* are *gay* and sprightly; or when we hear, what to corrupted nature is too harmonious *music*, that of *our own praise* from men. Oh that we may secure, what is of infinitely greater importance, the *praise of our heavenly Master*, by a constant obediential regard to these his precepts!

27—34. May we be happy proficients in the art of *bearing* and *forgiving injuries!* May we be *ready to every good word and work!* maintaining an *eye* quick to observe, a *heart* tender to feel, a *hand* open to relieve, the *calamities* and *necessities* of *friends*, of *strangers*, and of *enemies*: *giving* to some; and where, perhaps, there may be little prospect of a return, *lending* to others; which, if it engage them to greater industry, is as real a benefit as if the *loan* were a *gift*.

35, 36. On the whole, let us not presume to call God *our Father*, if we do not labour to *resemble him*; nor dare to challenge the peculiar honour and privileges of *Christ's disciples*, if we do not distinguish ourselves from others by the *charity* of our *tempers*, and the *usefulness* of our *lives*, as well as by the *articles* of our *faith* and the *forms* of our *worship*.

SECT. LIV.

Our Lord goes on to repeat many remarkable passages of his sermon on the mount, with some proper additions relating to the same subjects. Luke VI. 37, *to the end.*

LUKE VI. 37.

LUKE VI. 37. JUDGE not, and ye shall not be judg-

JUDGE not others with rigour and severity, *and you* may hope that you *shall not* yourselves *be judged* with that severity which you must otherwise expect from God, and which the most innocent and virtuous characters would

ed: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.

not be able to bear: *Condemn not* others with a rash censoriousness, *and you shall not be condemned; Forgive* others their offences; *and* if you do it from a truly religious principle,[a] *you shall* also *be forgiven* by God those offences against him, which are infinitely greater than any you can possibly receive from your fellow-creatures. (See Mat. vii. 1. p. 242.)

SECT. LIV. Luke VI. 37.

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom: for with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.

Give liberally to those that need your assistance, *and it shall be given* back *to you* in a rich abundance: for it will gain you so much love and respect, that God will so influence mens hearts in your favour, that *men shall*, as it were, *pour into your lap*[b] *good measure*, blessings *pressed down, and shaken together, and* even *running over; for* it may be taken as a general rule, that *by the same measure that ye measure with* to others, *it will* in return *be measured back to you.* (See Mat. vii. 2. p. 242.) 38

39 And he spake a parable unto them: Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

He spake also, at the same time, *a parable to them* (which he afterwards repeated, Mat. xv. 14,) to caution them against submitting with an implicit faith to the conduct of ignorant or vicious men, who might set up for religious teachers; and said, *Can the blind* undertake to *guide the blind? Will they not both*, in such a case, be likely to *fall into a pit*, or ditch, which may happen to lie in their way? And, in like manner, you have nothing to expect from following such men, but to perish with them. 39

40 The disciple is not above his master; but every one that is perfect, shall be as his master.

There is little reason to hope that, under their instruction, you should be wiser and better than they: for it is, you know, a common proverb, That *the scholar is not above his teacher; but* all that can reasonably be expected is, that *every* one who is a *finished* [*scholar*] should come up to him that teaches him; and it is this that he *will* principally aim at, to *be as his master*: It is of great importance therefore that you should 40

[a] If you do it from a truly religious principle.] This must be supposed, to make it consistent with those passages in which *love to God*, and *faith in Christ*, as well as other branches of the Christian temper, are insisted upon as so absolutely necessary, that without them, the greatest *lenity* and *indulgence* to our fellow-creatures, cannot give us a claim to the promises of pardon and salvation.

[b] *Into your lap.*] Here is an evident reference to the *mantles* which the Jews wore, into which a considerable quantity of corn might be received. Compare Ruth iii. 15; 2 Kings iv. 39; Neh. v. 13; Prov. xvi. 33.

SECT. LIV.

well consider whom you take to be your teachers; for it is necessary that your righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, if you expect a share in the kingdom of heaven. (See Mat. v. 20, and x. 24, 25.)

Luke vi. 40.

41 Yet, on the other hand, I would not have you to be forward in blaming them, or any other, while you neglect a due regulation of your own temper *and* conduct: for *why dost thou look at the* little *mote which is in thy brother's eye, and observest not the* much greater disorder which 42 is like a *beam in thine own eye? Or how canst thou*, with any decency, or to any purpose, *say to thy brother, Brother, hold still, [and] I will take out the mote which is in thine eye; while* thou art at the same time so blind and partial, that *thou seest not the beam which is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite*, who falsely pretendest that zeal for the honour of religion, which while thou art thus careless of thyself thou canst not really have, *first cast out the beam from thine own eye, and then thou wilt discern [how] to take out the mote that is in thy brother's eye*; which is an office that requires greater wisdom and conduct than in thy present circumstances 43 thou canst be supposed to have. (See the notes on Mat. vii. 3, 4, p. 242, 243.)

41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

42 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

Till thou shalt thus reform thyself, there is not much to be expected from thine endeavours to reform others: *for* as *there is no good* 44 *tree which produces bad fruit*; so *neither is* there *any bad tree which produces good fruit: For* all the world is agreed that *every tree is* to be *known by its proper fruit: men, for instance,*[c] *do not gather figs of thorns, nor do they gather* 45 *a cluster of grapes from a bramble.* (Compare Mat. vii. 16, p. 246.)

43 For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

44 For every tree is known by his own fruit: for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

And indeed, where men converse with any degree of intimacy, they may be known and judged of by their words as well as by their actions. *A good man*, maintaining an habitual sense of the Divine Presence, and feeling in his own soul a spring of habitual and diffusive benevolence to his fellow-creatures, naturally

45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good: and an evil man out of the evil

[c] *Men, for instance.*] This is one of those many places where the word γαρ (*for*) has not its usual signification, of introducing the *reason* of something before asserted, but merely intimates an illustration of it.

treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

produces that which is good, out of the good treasure of grace and love which is laid up in *his heart: and* on the other hand, *a bad man out of the bad treasure of* evil principles and corrupt affections which is laid up in *his heart, produces that which is bad,* which often breaks out before he is aware, and discovers his character, even contrary to his intention; *for his mouth* naturally *speaks from the overflowing of the heart,* and no man has so much artifice as to command it entirely so that it shall never discover itself in some unguarded moment. (Compare Mat. xii. 34, 35, (sect. lxii.)

SECT. LIV. Luke VI. 45.

46 And why call you me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Yet remember it is not merely by mens words that their character will finally be judged, *and* their estate fixed; especially that it will not be determined by a few pious and devotional forms of speech, which in themselves are of very little worth; for *why do ye call me, Lord, Lord,* or what imaginable purpose does that profession serve, if in your practice you are regardless of my will, *and do not the things which I say* and command to all that call themselves my disciples? (Compare Mat. vii. 21.)

46

47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like:

This is a vanity of which I have formerly warned you: and to repeat the warning, *I will shew you,* on the other hand, *to whom that man is like, who comes to me, and hears my words, and practises* agreeably to *them:* and, on the other hand, to whom it is that he may be resembled, who hears my words and doeth them not. As to the former, *he is like a* prudent *man, that built an house* on the river-side; *and,* considering the importance of the undertaking, and the difficulty of the situation, *dug deep* through the sand, and marle, and gravel, till he came to the solid stone, *and placed the foundation* of his house *upon a rock: and* afterwards he was abundantly repaid for all his labour and expence; for *when the inundation came, the current* of the river with an impetuous torrent *violently broke upon that house, and* yet *was not able to shake it, because it was founded upon a rock:* thus securely will the practical hearer stand the shock of temptations, and the trial of death and of the judgment-day. *But,* on the other hand, *he that hears* my words, *and does*

47

48 He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and, when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it; for it was founded upon a rock.

48

49 But he that heareth, and doeth

49

SECT. LIV. Luke VI. 49.

not practise them, *is like a* foolish *man, that built an house on the* bare surface of the *ground, without* any care to secure *a foundation; against which the* impetuous *stream did violently break* with the same fury, *and,* being unable to withstand the shock, *it presently fell down; and the ruin of that house was* irreparably *great,* and its inhabitants were all crushed under it. (Compare Mat. vii. 24—27, sect. xliii.)

not, is like a man, that without a foundation built an house upon the earth, against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 37 LET a frequent reflection on our own faults teach us *candour;* and let a sense of our continued dependence on the Divine liberality make us *liberal* towards those that need our assistance; lest we lose the comfort so justly forfeited, and *abused mercies* be 38 another day repaid with *measures of wrath, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.*

We are another day to give an account of ourselves before God: let us then judge for ourselves in matters of religion; and 39 be very careful that we do not stupidly follow *blind guides,* till we *fall with them* into destruction. "*Lead us,* O Lord, *in the* "*way everlasting!* Form us to a more perfect *resemblance* of 15 "our great *Master!* Make us *severe to ourselves,* and, so far as 43, 44 "it is real charity, *indulgent to others!* Sanctify *our hearts* by "thy grace, that they may be as *trees bringing forth good fruit,* "or as *fountains* pouring out wholesome streams! *There* may a 45 "*good treasure* be laid up, from whence *good things* may be "abundantly produced! *There* may those holy and benevolent "*affections* continually spring up, which may flow forth with "unaffected freedom to refresh the souls and animate the graces "of all that are around us!"

46, 49 May these beautiful, striking, repeated *admonitions,* which *our Saviour* gives us of the vanity of every *profession* which does not influence the *practice,* be attended to with reverence and fear! We are *building for eternity;* may we never grudge the time and labour of a most serious inquiry into the great fundamental principles of religion! May we discover *the sure foundation,* and raise upon it a noble superstructure, which shall stand fair and glorious when *hypocrites* are swept away into everlasting ruin, *in that awful day* in which *heaven and earth shall flee away from the face of him that sits upon the throne!* (Rev. xx. 11.)

SECT. LV.

Christ, after preaching in the plain, goes to Capernaum, and miraculously cures, even at a distance, the centurion's servant that was sick of a palsy. Luke VII. 1—10. Mat. VIII. 5—13.

LUKE VII. 1.

LUKE VII. 1. NOW when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

IN the two former sections we have heard the excellent discourse that Jesus made; and *now, when he had finished all* these *his sayings*, which though immediately addressed to his disciples, he had delivered *in the hearing of the people* who stood round him in the plain, having dismissed the assembly, *he* quickly after *entered into Capernaum* again. SECT. LV. Luke VII. 1.

2 And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

And at that time *the servant of a certain* Roman officer in that city, (called a *centurion*, from his having the command of a company of soldiers consisting of a hundred men,) *who was* dear to his master, and *greatly esteemed by him, was* exceeding *ill, and in* great *danger of death.* 2

3 And when he heard of Jesus, [when Jesus was entered into Capernaum,] he [came unto him; *having first*] sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. [MAT. VIII. 5.]

And hearing of Jesus, when he entered into Capernaum, where the nobleman's son was miraculously cured by him at a distance, (John iv. 46. sect. xxxi.) such was the faith of the centurion in his power to help him, that *he came to him*[a] with a very humble and respectful application; which indeed he did not directly presume to make in his own person, [*but first*] *sent unto him the elders of the Jews*, or some of the most considerable of them that dwelt in this city, in whom his generosity had procured a considerable interest; humbly *entreating him* by them, *that he would* condescend to *come and* set him free from the distress that he was in, not doubting his ability to *heal his servant*; *And saying*, *Lord, my* faithful and beloved *servant lies* at home *in* [*my*] *house* in a very deplorable condition, being *seized with the palsy*; which, though it has quite disabled him from motion, yet has left him sensible of pain, with which he is so *dreadfully tormented* that he can take no rest. 3

MAT. VIII. 6. And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. Mat. VIII. 6.

[a] *He came to him.*] It is very plain, from Luke's larger and more circumstantial representation of the case, that *the centurion* did not come at first in his own person, (see Luke vii. 6, 7.) but he might properly be said to do that which he directed *the elders* to do in his name: and nothing is more frequent, even to this day, in our courts of law, than to say that a person comes into the court and asks a thing, which he asks perhaps only at third hand, by the counsel whom his solicitor has employed in his cause.

SECT. LV.

Luke VII. 4. *And* such was the regard the elders of the Jews had for him, that, *being come to Jesus, they entreated him with great importunity, saying, He* in whose name we now address thee, *is* one who is *worthy of this favour.*[b] *For* though he be a Gentile, and a stranger among us, yet *he* is a worshipper of the true God, and greatly *loves our nation;* so that he takes many opportunities of doing good in the neighbourhood, (compare Acts x. 2.) *and* has carried his generosity so far, that *he hath built us a synagogue* for public worship, at his own expence.

LUKE VII. 4. And when they came to Jesus they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:

5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

Mat. VIII. 7. *And Jesus,* willing to pay some distinguishing respect to a person of so worthy a character, *saith unto him,* or sent him word by those who had petitioned for him, *I will* immediately *come* down to the centurion's house, to see the servant he is so concerned about, *and heal him.*

MAT. VIII. 7. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

Luke VII. 6. *And* accordingly, *Jesus went with them; and now,* as he was going thither, *when he was not a great way from the house, the centurion sent* some other *friends to him;* and at last came himself in person; *and answered* the kind message which Jesus had sent him, *saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself* to come any farther; *for I am not worthy that thou,* who art so holy

7 and honourable a person, *shouldest enter under my roof: Wherefore,* indeed *neither did I think myself,* who am an alien from this holy nation, *worthy to come* immediately *to thee;* but first chose to make use of the elders of the place, and of these my other friends: and all that I would now presume to ask is, That thou wouldest *but* please *only* to *speak the word, and* I know that *my servant shall* immediately *be healed.*

8 *For even I* [*who*] *am* only a centurion, *a man ranged under* the *authority* of my commanding officer,[c] yet as I *have soldiers under myself,* order and govern them by the intimations of my will, whether present or absent; *and I say to one,*

LUKE. VII. 6. Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, [and answered,] saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself, for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof: [MAT. VIII. 8.—]

7 Wherefore, neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a word [speak the word only,] and my servant shall be healed. [MAT. VIII. 8.]

8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers; and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come,

[b] *Worthy of this favour.*] By far the greater number of copies read it as it stands in our version, *Worthy for whom he should do this:* yet the connection seems to intimate that the original reading was ἀξιώσεις, *Thou shouldest do this.* I have chosen to render it in such a manner as will suit either.

[c] *Ranged under the authority* of my commanding officer.] It is well known, that the Roman centurions were subject to the command of their respective tribunes; as our captains are to that of their colonels.

and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. [MAT. VIII. 9.]

Go to such a place, *and he goeth*; *and to another, Come* hither, *and he cometh*; *and to my slave,*[d] *Do this, and he* immediately *doeth it*: now I firmly believe thou hast yet a more absolute power over the strongest and most desperate diseases, and canst at pleasure command them off from the afflicted, when thou art either near, or at a distance; and I shall thankfully accept this cure in the manner that may be least inconvenient to thyself. SECT. LV. Luke VII. 8.

9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, [Verily,] I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel, [MAT. VIII. 10.]

And Jesus hearing these things, admired him on account of his great humility, and the strength of his faith; *and, turning about, he said to the multitude that followed him, Verily, I declare unto you, That* through all my journies and converse, *I have not found, even in* all *Israel, such* an illustrious degree of *faith* as now appears in this stranger, who only sojourns among you. 9

MAT. VIII. 11. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

But I say unto you with great solemnity, *That many shall* at last *come*, not only from the neighbouring provinces of the Roman empire, but even *from* the remotest Gentile nations, which lie to *the east and west*[e] of its utmost boundaries, *and shall sit down with* your pious ancestors *Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob*, to share with them *in* the delightful entertainments and final blessedness of *the kingdom of heaven*.[f] Mat. VIII. 11.

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

But many of *the children of the kingdom*, who were born within the sacred enclosure, and appeared to stand fairest for all the mercies of the covenant, and indeed the bulk of the Jewish nation, *shall be* rejected with abhorrence for their unbelief, and be *cast out into that* gloomy *darkness which is without*:[g] *there shall be* perpetual *weeping* for sorrow, *and gnashing of the teeth* with envy, at such an enraging sight. 12

[d] *Slave.*] As the word δουλος generally signifies *a slave* rather than *a hired servant*, I chose to render it thus here, as thinking it most expressive of the authority to which the speech refers.

[e] *From the east and west.*] Perhaps this may be only a proverbial phrase to signify coming from the most distant parts. But I cannot forbear observing here, that the gospel spread much more to *the east* and *west* of Judea than to the *north* and *south* of it: though it seems rather to be spoken as a general expression, as will appear by comparing it with Luke xiii. 29. and Isa. xliii. 5, 6.

[f] Final blessedness of *the kingdom of heaven.*] So the phrase must here be explained; for it cannot be said, with any propriety, either that the holy patriarchs share with Christians in the present privileges of the gospel state, or that the *Jews weep and wail* on account of their being *excluded* from them.

[g] Gloomy *darkness which is without*: το σκοτος το εξωτερον.] It has justly been observed by many commentators that

SECT. LV.

Mat. VIII. 13. *And*, having uttered these words for the admonition of the Jews, and for the encouragement of this pious stranger and his friends, *Jesus said to the centurion*, who now stood by, *Go thy way* home[h] in peace; *and be it unto thee*, and to thy servant, *according to thy faith. And in that very hour* that he spake these words, just at that instant, *was his servant healed.*

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.

Luke VII. 10. *And they who had been sent* from the centurion as his messengers to Christ, *returning* with him *to the house*, were eye-witnesses of the cure, and *found the servant that had been sick, restored to perfect health* and vigour.[i] This might occasion the conversion of the family; and was a miracle that greatly raised the fame of Jesus, and made the multitude more eager in their pressing after him.

LUKE VII. 10. And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

IMPROVEMENT.

Luke vii. 2, 3. It is pleasant to think of this good *centurion*, who, amidst all the temptations of a military life, retained the principles, not only of liberality and humanity, but of piety too; and, probably amidst the raillery of his irreligious and idolatrous brethren, had 5 the courage to frequent, and even to *build a synagogue*. Surely his *devotion* did not enervate, but rather invigorate and establish his *valour*; nor did he find himself less dutifully regarded Mat. by the *soldiers* under his command for this parental tenderness viii. 6, 9. to his afflicted *servant*, which brought him thus humbly to *petition Christ* in his favour. Such may *our officers* be! and we may hope that *the hosts of heaven* will with pleasure *cover their heads in the day of battle*, and obedient *troops* be formed, by their example and their care, to the discipline of *virtue* as well as of *war*.

Luke vii. 4, 5 We see the force of real *goodness* to conquer the most inveterate *prejudices*: *the elders of the Jews at Capernaum* turn petitioners for a *Gentile*, for a *Roman centurion*: so may we disarm the virulence of a *party spirit*, and conciliate the *friendship* of those who otherwise might have their *eyes upon us for evil!*

this phrase, which is often used after *the kingdom of heaven* has been compared to a banquet, contains a beautiful allusion to the lustre of those illuminated rooms in which such feasts were generally celebrated, as opposed to that *darkness* which surrounded those who by night were turned out: but it also sometimes goes yet farther, when the persons excluded are supposed to be thrown into a dark dungeon. Compare Mat. xxii. 13; xxv. 30; and Jude, ver. 1.

[h] *Go thy way* home.] This most evidently proves that the centurion was at length *come out of his house*, probably on hearing that Jesus was nearer to it than he apprehended when he sent the second message by his *friends*.

[i] *Restored to perfect health* and vigour.] This the word ὑγιαινοντα seems to import; nor did it suit the honour and goodness of Christ to leave the *cure incomplete*. Compare Mat. viii. 15.

In plentiful circumstances and an honourable station, how great is the *humility* of this *worthy man!* How low are the thoughts that he has of himself! And with what veneration and respect does he address himself to *Christ!* And, had *this centurion* been even a *tribune* or a *general*, this humble address would well have become him when he was thus applying unto *Christ*. And how well does it become us, when entreating the blessed *Jesus* to exert his healing power on our hearts, to bow with deep humility before him, and to say, "*Lord, I am not worthy that* "*thou shouldest come under my roof*, or *worthy the honour of* "*appearing in thy presence!*" *He that* thus *humbleth himself, shall be exalted* (Luke xviii. 14.) nor do we ever stand fairer for the *praise of Christ* than when we see ourselves *undeserving* even of *his notice*. SECT. LV. Mat. viii. 8. Luke vii. 6, 7.

Behold an instance of *faith* in a *stranger to the commonwealth of Israel*, by which *their unbelief* was *condemned!* Oh that the *virtues of heathens* may not another day *rise up* to *our condemnation*, notwithstanding an higher profession and much nobler advantages! We cannot but rejoice to hear that *many shall come from the east and the west, to sit down with the pious patriarchs in the kingdom of heaven*: but how deplorable is the case of those *children of the kingdom*, who, with all their towering expectations, *shall be cast out*, and doomed to hopeless *sorrow* and to everlasting *darkness!* Mat. viii. 10, 11, 12

May *Almighty Grace* awaken those who are now ignorant of the value and importance of the *blessings* of the gospel; and excite those *holy desires* after them, which may prevent that *impatience* and *envy*, that *rage* and *despair*, with which they must otherwise view them at an unapproachable distance; yea, view them possessed by multitudes, whom they are now most ready to despise!

SECT. LVI.

After having quitted the multitude who crowded in upon him, and reposed himself that night at Capernaum, Jesus goes the next day to Nain, and raises the son of a poor widow from the dead, Mark III. 19—21. Luke VII. 11—17,

MARK III. 19.

MARK III. 19. AND they went into an house.

NOW after Jesus had performed this miracle *and* was prevented thus from going to the centurion's, before he left Capernaum with his twelve new chosen apostles, *they went into an house*,[a] where he commonly resided while he SECT. LVI. Mark III. 19.

[a] *They went into an house.*] We must conclude, from the manner in which Mark connects this with the names of the apostles, that it happened very quickly *after their being chosen*. The other evangelists inform us of some previous events which happened in the mean time; but they might be dispatched in a few hours.

SECT. LVI.

was in that city. *And the multitude*, that had been standing in the plain, *assemble again* about the doors and windows of the house; and, animated by the illustrious miracle he had just performed on the centurion's servant, they pressed *so* eagerly upon him, *that they* of the family *could not so much as eat bread*, though it was the proper hour for it. *And, when his friends had heard* [*of it,*] that he was so intent upon his work as to go out of doors again to preach to the people, *they went out* after him, *to lay hold on him*, and importune him to come in; *for they said, He is transported too far*,[b] not to allow himself time for his meals, after all the watchings of the last night, and the fatigue of this day.[c]

Mark III. 20.

20. And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

21 And, when his friends heard *of it*, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

Luke VII. 11.

And, Jesus having so far yielded to their importunity as to repose himself that evening there, *it came to pass on the next day, that he went* from Capernaum *to a city called Nain*;[d] *and many of his disciples went* thither *with him, and a great multitude* of others. *And, when he*

Luke VII. 11. And it came to pass the day after that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12 Now when he

This therefore is undoubtedly the proper place for these verses; and it is strange that Le Clerc and others should have placed them before the sermon in the plain. (See Luke vi. 17—20, p. 296, 297, 298.) I suppose this was after the cure of the centurion's servant, as the word προσλθοντι (Mat. viii. 5.) seems to intimate that Christ was then entering Capernaum; and the multitude was not yet dismissed when that cure was wrought. (Mat. viii. 10.)

[b] *They said, He is transported too far*: οτι εξεστη.] Our manner of rendering these words, *He is beside himself*, or, *He is mad*, is very offensive. One can hardly think Christ's friends would speak so contemptibly and impiously of him; and if that sense must necessarily be retained, it would be much more decent to render the clause, *It* (that is, *the multitude* mentioned in the verse before) *is mad*, thus unseasonably to break in upon him. But 2 Cor. v. 13. is the only passage in the New Testament where the word has this signification. It generally signifies *to be greatly transported*, or as we express it in a word derived from this, *to be thrown into an ecstasy*. (Mark ii. 12; v. 42; vi. 51; Luke viii. 56; and Acts ii. 7, 12; xii. 16.) And, though the Seventy sometimes use it for fainting away (Gen. xlv. 26; Josh. ii. 11; and Isa. vii. 2.) I do not find it ever signifies that faintness which arises from excess of labour or want of food; but our Lord's attendants seem to have feared lest his zeal and the present *fervency of his spirit* should have been injurious to his health.

[c] *After all the watching of the last night, and the fatigue of this day.*] Compare Luke vi. 12, *& seq.* sect. lii. whence it appears our Lord had sat up the preceding night, and eat nothing this day; but spent the morning in giving a charge to his new-chosen apostles, and the advance of the day in preaching to a vast auditory, and working many miracles.

[d] *To a city called Nain.*] If Nain was a city of the tribe of Issachar, and lay at the foot of mount Tabor (where most geographers have placed it), our Lord made a pretty long journey this day, especially considering what was mentioned in the last note; for he must thus have travelled about twelve miles. Lightfoot supposes it to be the same with En-gannim, which is mentioned in Josh. xix. 21, and xxi. 29; but this lay also in the tribe of Issachar, and must have been at no less distance from Capernaum. (See Lightfoot's Chorog. ad Luc. vii. 11, § 3.) The circumstance here recorded might probably happen towards the evening, at which season funerals are commonly celebrated.

SECT. LVI.

came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow: and much people of the city was with her.

approached the gate of the city, a circumstance happened, which proved the occasion of one of the most memorable miracles of his life. For *behold*, the corpse of *a dead person was carried out* in funeral procession, (according to their manner of burying without the walls of their cities), and the deceased was *the only son of his mother, and she was a widow*, which made the case so much the more deplorable; *and* this sad circumstance, together with others which attended it, so influenced the minds of many of her neighbours, that *there was a great multitude of the city with her.*

Luke VII. 12.

13 And, when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

And the Lord, seeing her in this afflicted condition *was moved with* tender *compassion for her;* so that he prevented any opportunity of solicitation on their part, *and said unto her, Weep not* any longer upon this occasion; for I am come to bring thee consolation and relief. 13

14 And he came and touched the bier, (and they that bare him stood still), and he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

And presently, *approaching* them, *he touched the bier*, on which, according to the manner of that place and time, the corpse was laid, covered over with a kind of mantle, or winding-sheet; *and the bearers*, who were carrying it upon their shoulders, *stood still: and* with an unaffected freedom and simplicity *he said*, in such a manner as discovered his Divine authority, *Young man, I say unto thee, Arise! And*, as soon as *he* had spoken these astonishing words, the youth *who had been dead*, awakened by that almighty energy which went along with them, *sat up, and began to speak; and* Jesus, when *he* thus had shewn his power in restoring him to life, discovered too the sympathizing kindness of a friend; and, taking him by the hand *delivered him to his mother*, in such a manner as to express the pleasure he found in changing her sorrow into a transport of proportionable joy. 14

15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak; and he delivered him to his mother.

15

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

And a religious *dread fell upon all* those who were present; *and they glorified God, saying, Truly a great prophet is risen up among us; and God has* again graciously *regarded his* ancient *people*, who were in former ages so often distinguished by his favours. 16

17 And this rumour of him went forth throughout all Judea and throughout all the region round about.

And this report of him, and of this glorious miracle which he had wrought, *went forth*, not only through the neighbouring parts of Galilee; but was soon spread *through all Judea, and the whole region* 17

SECT. LVI.

that was *round about*; and greatly heightened and increased the mighty expectations from him which they had long since begun to entertain.

Luke VII. 17.

IMPROVEMENT.

Luke VII. 16. IT surely becomes *us* likewise to *glorify God* on account of *this great Prophet*, whom he has *raised up*, not only *to his* ancient *people Israel*, but *to be for salvation to the ends of the earth.* (Acts xiii. 47.) Welcome, thou Messenger of the Father's love! How illustrious thy miracles! how important thy doctrine! how beneficent and amiable the whole of thy behaviour!

11 He went from *Capernaum* to *Nain*, still on the same blessed errand, to *do good* to the *bodies* and the *souls* of men. Oh that our lives, in their humbler sphere, might be such a circle of virtues and graces! that we might thus *go about doing good*; and might learn, by the happiest of all arts, to make the close of one useful and pious action the beginning of another!

13 Of him may we also learn the most *engaging manner* of conferring benefits; that lovely mixture of *freedom* and *tenderness*, which heightens the sweetness, and doubles the value of every favour! May *our hearts* imbibe the *same temper*, and it will diffuse on our actions some proportionable *gracefulness!* May *our bowels*, like his, *yearn over the afflicted*, and *our hand* be ever *ready* thus gently to *wipe away their tears!* But, O gracious *Redeemer*, how impotent is *our pity* when compared with *thine!* with *thine*, which could call back lamented *children* from the *grave*, and turn the *sorrows* of a *weeping parent* into a torrent of *joy!* We are sometimes ready fondly to say, "Oh that thou "hadst been *near* when the darlings of our hearts were snatched "away from us, and we left them in the dust!" But thou indeed wast *near*; for *thou hast the keys of death and the unseen world!* And this we know, that, if our beloved *children* are *sleeping* in thee, *thy voice* shall at length awaken them; and thou wilt *deliver them to us, to die no more*; and wilt *thyself* graciously *take part* in that mutual and lasting *joy* which thou shalt give to us and to them.

SECT. LVII.

John the Baptist sends two of his disciples to Jesus, to inquire whether he was the Messiah; and Jesus answers them in a convincing, though oblique manner. Luke VII. 18—23; Mat. XI. 2—6.

LUKE VII. 18.

WE have before mentioned the imprisonment of John the Baptist, and given some account of the occasion of it. (Sect. xxviii. p.

LUKE VII. 18. AND the disciples of John shewed

him of all these things.

163, & *seq.*) *Now the disciples of John* had the courage to resort to him where he was confined, and *informed him of* what passed: and they particularly gave him an account of *all these things* which had now lately been performed by Jesus; [a] how he had cured the centurion's servant at a distance, and raised the young man at Nain to life when they were carrying him out to his funeral.

SECT. LVII. Luke VII. 18.

19 And John [when *he* had heard in the prison the works of Christ,] calling unto him two of his disciples, sent *them* unto Jesus, saying [unto him,] Art thou he that should come, or look we for another? [MAT. XI. 2, 3.]

And when John had thus *heard in* his *prison the works of Christ*, as the very persons that brought him the news of them seem to have entertained some doubt concerning Jesus, whether he was the promised Messiah or no: for their satisfaction therefore, rather than his own, [b] *he called two of his disciples to him, and sent them* in his own name *to Jesus, saying unto him*, What dost thou say to this plain question, *Art thou* the great expected Messiah, whom we have so long been used to speak of by the emphatical title of *He that cometh*, [c] *or are we to*

19

[a] *All these things* which had now lately been performed by Jesus.] This is a plain argument, that this message from John happened quickly after the miracles which Luke had recorded in the preceding part of this chapter. And therefore, though Matthew has mentioned many other facts and discourses before he relates this message, yet, because he asserts nothing at all as to the order and connection of it, (see Mat. xi. 2.) I have, with most other harmonizers, thought myself obliged to follow Luke, on the principles laid down above. See note [a], p. 256.

[b] For their satisfaction therefore, rather than his own.] Mr. L'Enfant, with some others, thinks (as Justin Martyr and Tertullian did,) that John was so discouraged by his own long imprisonment, that he began himself to doubt whether Jesus was the Messiah: and, agreeably to this, he supposes that when our Lord afterwards says, *Happy is he that is not offended in me*, he meant it as a *caution to John*, that he should be upon his guard against so dangerous a temptation. But, considering what clear evidence John had before received by a miraculous sign from heaven, and what express and repeated testimonies he himself had borne to Jesus, I cannot imagine this to have been possible; especially as he foresaw, and foretold, that he must himself quickly be laid aside. (John iii. 30. p. 160.)—But his disciples might very probably be offended at this circumstance, as well as at the freedom of Christ's conversation, so different from the austerity used among them; and therefore he might think it necessary to put them in the way of farther satisfaction: not to say, that the warmth of John's temper might render him something uneasy at the reserve which Christ maintained; and that he might imagine it agreeable to the general design of his own office, as his forerunner, thus to urge a more express declaration.—For these reasons, I chuse to render and paraphrase it thus, rather than with Limborch (Theol. Christ. lib. iii. cap. 11. § 14.) to translate it, *Thou art he that should come, and do we look for another?* that is, We do not expect any Messiah but thee: so understanding it, as a repeated testimony, which John bore by proxy while he could no longer do it in his own person. All the spirit of Christ's answer would be lost, if we were to understand the message in this sense.

[c] *He that cometh:* ὁ ἐρχόμενος.] It seems that, by their speaking of the Messiah by this phrase, (*He that cometh*, or *He that is coming*,) the pious Jews in the most lively manner expressed their confident expectation of him, and their eager longing for his appearance, as the greatest

SECT. LVII.

expect another under that character? Answer the question as expressly as I formerly bore my testimony to thee.

Luke VII. 20. *And when the men* who were employed by John to be his messengers to Jesus upon this important errand *were come to him, they* delivered their message with great exactness; and *said, John the* celebrated *Baptist*, whose courage and faithfulness in his ministerial office have been the occasion of his imprisonment, *has sent us to thee, saying, Art thou he that cometh*, and dost thou own thyself to be indeed the great Messiah, *or are we to expect another* under that character?

20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?

21 *Now* Jesus was determined to return an answer to their question, by actions rather than by words; and therefore *in that very hour*, while they were present with him, and were eye-witnesses of what he did, (as the message was on purpose delivered before a large assembly of people, in which, as usual, there were many who came to be healed of various incurable distempers,) *he* exercised the power that he had of working miracles, and *cured many* that were then before him *of their diseases and plagues*,[d] *and* delivered them from the possession *of evil spirits, and* graciously *bestowed sight on many that were blind*.[e]

21 And in that same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight.

22 *And* then *Jesus, answering* their demand, *said unto them, Go, and relate to John the things which you* yourselves *have seen and heard* this day, as well as those you have been informed of by others, who have been eye and ear witnesses of my miracles and discourses: say, in particular, *That the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf*

22 Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead

and most welcome messenger of God to man, and the most desirable person that *ever did*, or *should come* into the world. (See Mark xi. 9, 10; and compare Psal. cxviii. 26; Dan. vii. 13; Hab. ii. 3; Septuag. Isa. lxii. 11; and Zech. ix. 9.) —Bishop Pearson justly observes that *this*, among many other arguments proves, that the notion of two Messiahs, one suffering, and the other triumphant, is a vain dream of the modern Jews, that was altogether unknown to the ancients. See Pearson on the Creed p. 183.

[d] *Of their diseases and plagues.*] Μαστιγες, *plagues*, or *scourges*, may probably signify some of the most grievous distempers, such as leprosies, palsies, inveterate fluxes, &c. (compare Mark iii. 10, and v. 29—34.) and may allude to their being supposed to be such corrections as intimated the *great displeasure of God* against the persons on whom they were sent. Compare John v. 14, and ix. 2.

[e] *And* graciously *bestowed sight*, &c.] The original phrase, εχαρισατο το βλεπειν, seems to express both in how generous, and in how kind and affectionate a manner, *our blessed Redeemer performed these cures.*

are raised, [and] to the poor the gospel is preached. [MAT. XI. 4, 5.]

hear, the very *dead are raised: and* observe also, that I do not court the rich and the great, as impostors are most apt to do; nor do I bear a commission chiefly directed to them, as some of the prophets did; but, as you see by the auditory now around me, *the poor*, and even the meanest of the people, *have the gospel preached to them;* they have the good news of eternal salvation most freely published among them, and the blessings of it offered to their acceptance. *And* be sure you add farther, that I appear in such circumstances, that there is reason to say, *Happy is he that is not scandalized*, or stumbled, *at me:*[f] for he must be singularly wise and religious, who is not shocked by the strong popular prejudices which lie against me. Let John consider these things in themselves, and let him compare them with those prophecies[g] which foretell that the Messiah should work such miracles, (Isa. xxv. 5, 6;) that he should preach the gospel to the poor, (Isa. lxi. 1;) and that many should despise and reject him, (Isa. viii. 14; liii 1—3.) And he, and, by a parity of reason, you, and the rest of his disciples, may easily collect a convincing answer to the question you are come to ask, without any more express declaration from me.[h]

SECT. LVII. Luke VII. 36.

23 And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me. [MAT. XI. 6.]

23

[f] *Happy is he that is not scandalized*, or stumbled *at me.*] This was intended as an awful *admonition* to the disciples of John that they should themselves guard against those prejudices which might prevent their receiving Christ; and contains a strong intimation, that their final happiness would be determined by the regards they should pay to him, as well as that these prejudices should generally prevail to mens ruin. See note [e] on Mat. v. 29, p. 221.

[g] Compare them with those prophecies.] Archbishop Tillotson has largely shewn the correspondence between the prophecies and events here referred to; see Tillotson's works, Vol. II. p. 451, *& seq.*—Dr. Thomas Jackson has laboured the point yet more largely in the second part of his curious discourse on this text. See his works, Vol. II. p. 470, *& seq.*

[h] Without any more express declaration from me.] Nothing could be more apposite, natural, and convincing, than such an answer as this, which took its rise from what Christ was then doing, and rested on the most apparent testimony of God himself in astonishing miracles, to which they knew their master made no pretences; (See John x. 41.) miracles of so beneficent a nature, that no austerities of a retired life were by any means comparable to them; and miracles receiving an additional lustre, from their being foretold by a prophet many ages before, (see note [i] on John ii. 22, p. 145.) and even by Isaiah the prophet, by whom the Baptist was so particularly described, that as he himself had frequently referred to him. (Mat. iii. 3; Luke iii. 4—6; and John i. 23.) so his disciples must, no doubt, have made themselves peculiarly familiar with his writings.—These, and many other particulars, are set in a most beautiful light by the masterly hand of Bishop Atterbury, in his Posthumous Sermons, Vol. I. p. 41—50, who has very judiciously abridged what is most material in the large discourse of the learned Dr. Jackson referred to in note [g].

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. LVII. Verse 18 19 22 23

We have here in *John the Baptist* a very edifying instance of a most candid and pious temper. How solicitous was he to remove those *scruples* from the minds of *his disciples* which, perhaps, their excessive *fondness for him* might have occasioned? He wisely *sends them* to converse with *Jesus* themselves: and surely they, who most accurately inquire into the *credentials* he brings, will be most effectually convinced and impressed by them.

Let us, when tempted to doubt of the *truth of Christianity*, recollect the various and unanswerable *proofs* of it, which are summed up in these comprehensive words; arising from the *miracles* and *character* of our *Redeemer*, and the *prophetic testimony* that was borne to him. Let us particularly rejoice, that *the poor have the gospel preached;* and that the *blessings* of it are offered to enrich the souls of those, whose bodily necessities we often *pity*, without having it in our power to *relieve* them.

And, since *our Lord* pronounces *a blessing* upon those *that shall not be offended in him*, let us consider what those things are, in the doctrine or circumstances of *Christ*, which have proved the most dangerous *stumbling-blocks*, and endeavour to fortify our souls against those temptations which may arise from them. So *the trial of* that *faith* which is a *much more valuable* treasure, *than gold which perishes, though tried in the fire*, may *be found unto praise, and honour, and glory*, (1 Pet. i. 7;) and we, on the whole, may be advanced in our way by *incidents* which at first threatened to turn us entirely out of it; as the *faith* of these *disciples of John* must surely be confirmed by those *doubts* which they had for a while entertained.

SECT. LVIII.

Jesus discourseth with the multitude concerning John, and justly complains of the perverseness of that generation. Luke VII. 24—35. Mat. XI. 7—19.

LUKE VII. 24.

SECT. LVIII. Luke VII. 24.

NOW when the messengers of John were gone away to inform their master of the things which they had seen and heard, *Jesus began to speak unto the multitude* that still surrounded him, *concerning John* the Baptist, and to inquire into the reason of their having formerly flocked after him as they had done. I know (said he) that many of you were of the number of his hearers, and were baptized by him: now I would seriously ask you, and advise you at-

LUKE VII. 24.

AND when the messengers of John were departed, [Jesus] began to speak unto the people concern-

SECT. LVIII.

ing John; What went ye out in the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind? [MAT. XI. 7.]

tentively to ask yourselves, *What went you out into the wilderness* in which he preached, *to behold?* You did not surely go on any trifling occasion, or for a mere amusement: none of you would be so senseless as to undertake a journey to see *a reed*, or a bulrush *shaken by the wind*; nor can you say you found him wavering in his conduct, or inconsistent in the testimony that he bore to me. Luke VII. 24.

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in king's courts. [MAT. XI. 8.]

But what then *went you out to see?* You could not go with any expectation to find *a man* in such a place, *dressed in soft garments* of the finest silk, and living in an elegant and sumptuous way: for *behold, they that wear a splendid dress, and live luxuriously, are* to be sought *in royal palaces*, rather than in a rough and barren wilderness; and you well knew that John's manner of living was plain and austere, such as suited the message he brought, and illustrated his integrity in delivering it. 25

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet. [MAT. XI. 9.]

But once more I would ask you, *What did you* then *go out to see?* Are you not ready to allow that you went out to see *a prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a* common *prophet. For this is the* very *person of whom it is written*, (Mal. iii. 1.) "*Behold*, O my Son, "*I send my* appointed *messenger before thy* "*face, who shall prepare thy way before thee*, "and in a proper manner introduce thee into "the world." 26 27

27 [For] this is he of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. [MAT. XI. 10.]

MAT XI. 11. Verily, I say unto you, Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater [prophet] than John the Baptist: notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he. (LUKE VII. 28.)

Wherefore *I assuredly say unto you*, That *among* all *those that have been born of women*, or the whole race of mankind in all former ages, *there hath not arisen a prophet greater than John the Baptist*; for as he is, with regard to his moral and religious character, one of the best of men, so he has some peculiar honours superior to any prophet of former generations:[a] *nevertheless*, there is a sense in which *he that is least in the kingdom of heaven*, not only in its final glories, but even here on earth, *is greater* Mal. XI. 11

[a] Superior to any prophet of former generations.] The obvious sense of what is here expressed, together with the following words, does plainly limit it to *them alone*. And it might properly be said that John was *greater* than any of the ancient prophets on account of his wonderful conception and birth, his excellent knowledge of gospel mysteries (see especially John iii. 27, & *seq.* & xxvii.) his express testimony to the Messiah, and his remarkable success in making way for him: John was also himself the subject of ancient prophecies, and long expected by the church.

SECT. LVIII.

than he; for my ministers, and people in general, shall receive superior supplies of the Spirit, and know many important truths relating to my gospel, which have not been revealed to John himself

Mat. XI. 11.

Luke VII. 29.

He is now laid aside from his ministry, yet I would have you to reflect upon the consequences of his preaching, and to consider the success of it: *and* you must needs remember that when he came and preached the baptism of repentance, and publicly proclaimed that the Messiah was at hand, *all the people* in general *hearing* [*him*] preach,[b] *and* even *the publicans* themselves *justified God*, and testified their approbation of the Divine scheme[c] in sending such an Ambassador, by professing to fall in with the design of his appearance, and *being* accordingly *baptized with the baptism of John*, humbly confessing their sins, and declaring their repentance. *But the* proud *Pharisees, and doctors of the law*, to their own unspeakable detriment, *rejected the* gracious *counsel of God* addressed *to them, not being baptized by him*, when they saw how plainly he dealt with them and their brethren.[d]

LUKE VII. 29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

Mat. XI. 12.

But though these great *and* learned men despised him, yet the good effects of his ministry on others are still apparent; for *from the days of John the Baptist*, or from the time in which he bore his public testimony to an approaching Messiah, *even to the present time*,[e] the spirits of

MAT. XI. 12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the king-

[b] *All the people* in general *hearing him preach.*] The reader will observe that (with Grotius,) I take these to be *the words of Christ*, continuing his discourse; whereas our translation seems rather to intimate they are the reflection of Luke on the sentiments of those who were now *hearing Christ*. I long considered them in this view; but it now seems to me so evident, from the most ancient manuscripts and versions, that the words, *And the Lord said*, at the beginning of ver. 31, were not in the original that I could not but connect and render them thus. Nevertheless I shall shew so much regard to the common reading as to add (in note [b] below) the version and paraphrase in that sense and connection; submitting it, on the whole, to the learned reader to judge as he shall think proper; but must first desire him to consult Grotius, Dr. Mill, and the polyglot.

[c] *Justified God*, and testified their approbation, &c.] From the *opposition* between those that *justified God* and those that *rejected his counsel*, it is plain, that *to justify* here signifies to *approve and vindicate*. Compare ver. 35. (at the end of this section;) Rom. iii. 4; and 1 Tim. iii. 16.

[d] How plainly he dealt with them and their brethren.] Of this see the paraphrase on Luke iii. 10, p. 105.

[e] *From the days of John the Baptist, even to the present time.*] Sir Isaac Newton (on prophecy, p. 159.) urges this as an argument to prove that some considerable time must have elapsed since John's imprisonment. But, on the common hypothesis, it might be near a year; and our Lord might probably include some time of his ministry preceding his imprisonment: so that we cannot be much assisted in our calculations by this text.

dom of heaven, suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

men are so raised and animated by a desire after *the kingdom of heaven*, that it *is* (as it were) *attacked with violence*, like a besieged city; men of all sorts are pressing to get into it, *and the violent seize it* with eagerness:[f] multitudes are flocking around me, to be instructed in the nature of my kingdom; and some of most licentious characters, who have been looked upon as little better than ruffians and bravoes, seem resolutely set on securing it; while others of graver and fairer characters are found to neglect it. (Compare Luke xvi. 16.)

SECT. LVIII. Mat. XI. 12.

13 For all the prophets, and the law, prophesied until John.

This is a new, and very wonderful event. *For till* [*the time of*] *John* the Baptist, *all the prophets prophesied; and the law* of Moses, as explained by them, was the only revelation of God's will to the people of Israel; which, so far as it related to me, was but an obscure intimation of what men were to expect from my appearance: but John opened a much more perfect dispensation. *And* indeed (to speak more plainly than I have commonly done), *if you will* hearken to my testimony, and *receive* [*it*] *this* John *is* the *Elijah who was to come*,[g] or the person whom Malachi describes under that name, as to be sent before the coming of the day of the Lord. (Mal. iv. 5, 6.) This is so important an intimation, that I must urge your most attentive regard to it: and therefore, *He that hath ears* able *to hear, let him hear* [*it,*] and let every one that has a mind capable of reflection, reflect seriously upon it; for to understand and regard the character and mission of John aright, will have a most happy tenden-

13

14 And if ye will receive *it*, this is Elias which was for to come.

14

15 He that hath ears to hear let him hear.

15

[f] *The kingdom of heaven is attacked with violence—and the violent seize it* with eagerness.— βιαζεται, και βιασται αρπαζουσιν αυτην.] The words of the original are very strong and forcible, and the translation I have given is very literal.—It seems necessary to interpret the latter clause as in the paraphrase, to prevent the appearance of a tautology: Yet I did not venture to render βιασται, *ruffians* or *bravoes*; because I think the version should be left in as great a latitude as the original; and I was afraid so great a variation from what is commonly taken to be the meaning of this passage, might have shocked some at the first hearing.—To suppose, as a late ingenious writer has done, that this refers to the first attempts made to *destroy the gospel* in its infancy, and that αρπαζειν signifies *tear it to pieces*, does not appear natural in this connection; though the word must be allowed sometimes to have that import.

[g] *This* John *is the Elijah who was to come.*] How little there is in Mr. Collins's objection against thus fixing Malachi's prophecy of Elijah to John the Baptist, many of his learned antagonists have shewn; and I think none in a easier and stronger light than Mr. Bullock: See his Vindication, pref. p. 50.

SECT. LVIII.

cy to promote your receiving Him whom John was sent to introduce.[h]

Luke VII. 31. [*And the Lord* Jesus farther *said,*] *To what then shall I* now *compare the men of this generation? and to what* indeed *are they like?* Reflect upon yourselves, and you will surely see the justice of the comparison which I am 32 going to make. *They are like* a company of *little children,*[i] whom you may sometimes have observed, as they were *sitting in the market-place,* to be so froward and perverse in their behaviour to each other, that no contrivance could be found to please them; *and* some of them you may have heard *calling out to their companions, and saying,* What shall we do to please you, and to bring you to join with us in our diversions? We have tried all the ways we can think of: sometimes *we have piped to you* a pleasant tune, *and you have not danced* to the music; and at other times *we have* changed the ditty, and *mourned to you,* or played and sung such dirges as are used at funerals, *and you have not* taken your part, and *lamented* with us; but are always finding fault with every thing we do, and will not be prevailed upon to join 33 with us. Such is that childish obstinacy and perverseness that appears in you who think yourselves the oracles of wisdom in the present age; and you discover the same froward temper in far more important instances: *for John the Baptist,* of whom I have now been speaking, *came* with an uncommon austerity of behaviour,

LUKE VII. 31. And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like? [MAT. XI. 16.—]

32 They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, [unto their fellows,] and saying, We have piped unto you and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept, [*or* lamented.] [Mat. XI. 16, 17.]

33 For John the Baptist came, nei-

[h] *Whom John was sent to introduce.*] According to the received reading, Luke vii. 29, 30, must be introduced here, and may be paraphrased thus: "29—*And* "*all the people* that were present, *and the* "*publicans* in particular, *when they heard* "[*this*] discourse, *having* formerly *been* "*baptized with the baptism of John, justifi-*"*ed* and approved the wisdom of God as "illustrated in it. 30—*But the Pharisees* "*and doctors of the law,* in whose presence "it was delivered, disrelished it; and, "puffed up with a vain conceit of their "own knowledge and goodness, *rejected* "*the* gracious *counsel of God towards them;* "and, *not having been baptized by him,* "were displeased to hear so high an en-"comium given to John. 31—*And the* "*Lord* knowing how ready they were to "cavil, both at him and his fore-runner, "said with a particular reference to "these Pharisees and doctors, *Where-*"*unto then shall I liken the men of this* "*generation? &c.*" Compare note [b] in this section.

[i] *They are like little children.*] It is plain *our Lord's* exact meaning is, that *the men of that generation,* or the cavillers of whom he was now speaking, were *like the children complained of,* and not *like those that made the complaint:* but, more especially in Matthew's style, the phrase [*it is like*] often signifies only in general that the thing spoken of may be illustrated by the following similitude. And so the *phrase* must be understood. Mat. xiii. 24, and 45; xviii. 23; xx. 1; and xxii. 2.

ther eating bread, nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil. [Mat. XI. 18.]

neither eating bread, as others do, *nor drinking wine*, but living on locusts and honey, and water, in the wilderness; *and you say, He has a devil*, and acts like a wild distracted demoniac, whom an evil spirit drives from the society of men.

SECT. LVIII. Luke VII. 33.

34 The son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. [Mat. XI. 19.—]

On the other hand, *the Son of man is come*, without any of this severity, *eating and drinking*, as others do, conversing familiarly among you, and with a temperate freedom sharing in your festivals as well as your common meals; *and you say, Behold, a gluttonous man, and a winebibber; a* fit *friend* and companion *of publicans and sinners:* thus ungratefully do you injure his character for that humanity and condescension which you should rather applaud. 34

35 But wisdom is justified of all her children. [Mat. XI. 19.]

But, nevertheless, true *wisdom has* still *been justified* and vindicated *by all* those who are indeed *her children:* and they who are truly wise and religious must needs approve this beautiful variety in the conduct of Providence; and see that the difference in our manner of living suits the purposes of our respective appearances, and is adapted to promote the general design of God's glory and man's salvation. 35

IMPROVEMENT.

How happy would it be, if we could learn to correct the natural *inconsistences* of our temper and conduct by wise reflections and considerations! How much more improving would our *attendance* on the ministrations of God's servants be, were we seriously to ask ourselves *to what purpose we attended!* Luke VII. 32. 24—26.

It ought surely to be followed with such considerations, since it is intended to lead us to *the kingdom of heaven:* a glorious prize! too glorious to be obtained by faint wishes and inactive desires. There is a sense in which it still *suffers violence:* and how sad is the degeneracy of our natures, that we should exert *so little warmth* in such a pursuit, and *so much* for every trifle! Instead of that *holy ardour* with which men should *press into it*, they fold their hands in their bosoms, and lose themselves in soft luxurious dreams, till the precious opportunity is for ever gone. May Divine grace display the *crowns* and *palms* of victory before our eyes, in so awakening a manner, that we may joyfully *seize them*, whatever *obstacles* may lie in our way, whatever must be *done*, or whatever must be *borne* to secure them! Mat. XI. 12.

Let us not, as we love our own souls, through a proud self-sufficiency, *reject the* gracious *counsels of God* which are addressed to us, lest we should be another day *condemned* by Luke VII. 30.

SECT. LVIII. Verse 35

publicans and sinners. Divine providence and grace are using a variety of methods with us: let not our perverseness and folly, like that of the *Jews frustrate* them all: but rather let us shew ourselves *the children of wisdom*, by falling in with its measures, and improving as well as applauding them.

SECT. LIX.

Our Lord laments over the impenitent cities of Galilee, acknowledges the Divine sovereignty in the dispensations of the gospel, and invites sinners to come to him. Mat. XI. 20, *to the end.*

MAT. XI. 20.

SECT. LIX. Mat. XI. 20.

THEN, after Jesus had in general reproved the Jews for the perverseness of their carriage under the great advantages that they enjoyed, *he began* particularly *to upbraid the cities in which most of his miracles had been wrought, because they did not repent*, and believe in him:[a]

21 And in the most affectionate and solemn manner he declared, how terrible would be the consequence of their impenitence and unbelief; and said, *Wo unto thee, O Chorazin*, and *wo unto thee, O Bethsaida*, where I so often have conversed and taught! *for* surely *if the miracles which have been wrought in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon* of old, though they were places so remarkable for their luxury, pride, and contempt of religion,[b] *they would long ago have repented* with tokens of the deepest humility, covering themselves *in sackcloth, and* lying in

22 *ashes.*[c] *Wherefore I say unto you*, That as they never had such means of conviction as

MAT. XI. 20.

THEN began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not.

21 Wo unto thee, Chorazin! wo unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto

[a] *Because they did not repent* and believe in him.] Our Lord had great reason thus to upbraid them on this occasion, considering how much time he had spent among them, and how many excellent discourses he had delivered, as well as how many surprising miracles he had wrought in these parts; as may be seen in several preceding sections.

[b] Places so remarkable for their luxury, and contempt of religion.] This is frequently the case with rich trading cities: and that it was so with *these* in particular, may be learned from many passages in the Old Testament, as well as from profane writers. See Judg. xviii. 7; Isa. xxiii. 9; Ezek. xxviii. 2, 5, 17, 22; and Amos i. 9, 10.—May God preserve London in particular from resembling them in character, whom in commerce and grandeur it so much exceeds.

[c] Covering themselves *in sackcloth* and *lying in ashes.*] As *covering themselves with sackcloth* (or *hair-cloth*, for such it was,) and *lying in ashes*, were usual expressions of *mourning*; so they particularly were made use of on days of public fasting and deep humiliation for sin; and therefore are justly introduced here, as expressions of sincere repentance and self-abhorrence. Compare Esth. iv. 1—3; Job xlii. 6; Isa. lviii. 5; Dan. ix. 3; and Jonah iii. 6—8.

you. it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon, at the day of judgment, than for you.

SECT. LIX. Mat. XI. 20.

you have been indulged with and have ungratefully abused, *the condition* even *of Tyre and Sidon, in the day of* the final and universal *judgment*, [d] *shall be more tolerable than yours*, who will deservedly be exposed to a much heavier weight of vengeance. (Compare Luke x. 13, 14, sect. xcvii.)

23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

And thou especially, *O* guilty *Capernaum*, 23
who hast been (as it were) *exalted even to heaven*, not only in wealth and magnificence, (compare Dan. iv. 22.) but what is infinitely more valuable, in the means of grace, by my long abode in thee, and continued labours among thine inhabitants: such dreadful desolation is appointed for thee, that thou *shalt* (as it were) *be brought down to hell*, being swallowed up in utter irrecoverable destruction: (compare Isa. xiv. 13—15.) And thy punishment will be apparently just: *for* surely *if the miracles which have been wrought in thee, had been performed* even *in Sodom* itself, licentious and abandoned as that infamous city was, [e] *it would* have been convinced and reformed; so that, instead of being consumed by that shower of flaming vengeance, it might *have continued* in all its glory and beauty *even to this day. Wherefore I say unto* 24
you, That the condition even of the inhabitants *of the land of Sodom in the day of* the final *judgment, shall be more tolerable than yours*; for your condemnation shall rise in proportion to your more aggravated guilt, and to those more valuable mercies and privileges which you have abused.

24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee.

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O

At that time also (as well as at another that will 25
be elsewhere mentioned, Luke x. 21, sect. cvi.) *Jesus took occasion*, from the circumstances which he then observed, *to say*, [f] *I ascribe glory*

[d] *In the day of judgment.*] Dr. Hammond understands this passage as referring to the temporal calamities to come on these places by the Romans; who did indeed shortly after overrun the whole country, and made dreadful ravages in some of these cities. See Joseph. de Bell. Jud. lib. iii. cap. 6, 7. (al. 5, 6.) & lib. vi. cap. 9. (al. vii. 17.) But there is no evidence that the destruction of these Jewish cities was more dreadful than that of Tyre and Sidon, and it was certainly less so than that of Sodom and Gomorrah: besides, our Lord plainly speaks of a *judgment*, that was *yet to come*, on all these places that he mentions.

[e] Licentious and abandoned as that infamous city was.] It is well known, that those abominable cities of Sodom and Gomorrah had long since grown into a proverb for wickedness and misery. See Gen. xiii. 13; xviii. 20; Deut. xxix. 23; xxxii. 32; Isa. i. 9, 10; iii. 9; xiii. 19; Jer. xxiii. 14; xlix. 18; Lam. iv. 6; Amos iv. 11; Zeph. ii. 9; Mat. x. 15; and Rev. xi. 8.

[f] *Jesus took occasion to say.*] It is in the

SECT. LIX.

Mat. XI. 25.

to thee, O Father, [g] thou supreme *Lord of heaven and earth, that* while *thou hast,* in the course of thy wise, though mysterious providence, *hid these* great *things* of thy gospel *from* those who have the character of *wise and understanding persons,* [h] or from the learned scribes and refined politicians of the age, whom thou hast suffered, through their own pride and folly, to reject them with disdain; thou hast brought the humble to the knowledge of them, *and hast* graciously *revealed them to* many of the lowest and plainest of mankind, who, in comparison

26 of the former, are but as *infants.* Mortifying as such a circumstance might seem, I cordially acquiesce in it; and say, *Be it so, O* my *Father, since such is thy* sovereign will and *pleasure* thus to exalt thine own glorious name, and to lay the creature in low abasement before thee.

27 And then, turning himself to those that stood near him, he said, Do not be led by the example of your great and learned men to slight and despise me; for, humble as my circumstances now appear, *all things are delivered unto me by my* almighty *Father,* who has fully instructed and empowered me for whatever relates to the salvation of men: [i] *And* such are the mysteries and glories of my person and kingdom, that *no one* fully *knows the Son, but the Father;* [k]

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

26 Even so, Father, for so it seemeth good in thy sight.

27 All things are delivered unto me, of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father;

original, αποκριθεις ο Ιησους ειπεν; which our translation has literally rendered, *Jesus answered and said:* but when the words so introduced are not a reply to any preceding speech, I apprehend the version here given expresses the sense of them with yet greater exactness.—The words *(at that time)* seem plainly to prove, that what follows is to be introduced here, and consequently that Luke x. 21, 22, is a repetition of it on another proper occasion.

[g] *I ascribe glory to thee, O Father.*] This is one proper meaning of εξομολογουμαι, as appears from comparing Heb. xii. 15, and Rom. xv. 9.

[h] *Thou hast hid these things from wise and understanding persons.*] God is often said in scripture, *to do those things* which he determines to *permit,* and which he foresees will be in fact the consequence of those circumstances in which his creatures are placed, though their wills are laid under no constraint. (Compare Exod. vii. 3, 4; 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12; xxiv. 1; and 1 Kings xxii. 23.) In this sense alone could he be said to *hide those things* from the learned men of this age, which he revealed so plainly, that honest and well-disposed persons, though children in understanding, might come to the knowledge of them. Compare Mat. x. 34, 35.

[i] Has fully instructed and empowered me, &c.] I cannot, with Mr. L'Enfant confine the sense of παντα μοι παρεδοθη merely to the instructions Christ had received from the Father: his *exaltation to supreme power and government* was so near, and so sure, that our Lord might with great propriety intend the phrase in that more extensive sense I have given it. Compare John v. 22, and Mat. xviii. 18.

[k] *No one knows the Son, but the Father.*] These words evidently declare, that there is something inexplicably mysterious in the *nature* and *person of* Christ; which indeed appears in the most convincing manner, from the account elsewhere given of his Deity in scripture.

SECT. LIX. Mat. XI. 27.

neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.

neither does any truly *know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son is pleased to reveal him:* For I have that knowledge of him to which no creature can pretend; and it is my great errand to the world, to discover his nature and will, and lead his wandering creatures into a saving acquaintance with him; A work which I undertake with the greatest cheerfulness and delight: and therefore, *come unto me* by faith,

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden: and I will give you rest.

28 *all ye that labour and are heavy burdened*, whether with the distresses of life, or with the sense of guilt, (see Psal. xxxii. 4; xxxviii. 4.) or with the load of ceremonial observances which your unmerciful teachers are so ready to impose, (Mat. xxiii. 4.) *and I will ease you* of the grievous burdens you are sinking under.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

29 Be persuaded then to *take my yoke upon you*, and to *learn of me*, as my obedient disciples; *for I am meek*, condescending, *and lowly in heart*,[1] *and* will impose no unnecessary hardships upon you: but on such an application to me, *you shall find* that *refreshment to your souls* which you in vain would seek elsewhere; that composure, satisfaction, and joy, which nothing but humility and meekness, with an entire subjection to me, can give. *For* such is the genius of my gospel, that though it will indeed bring you under some restraints, they are not only tolerable, but, on the whole, desirable; and I may truly say, that *my yoke is easy* and gentle; or, if there be a mixture of difficulty attending it, such assistances *and* encouragements are provided, that with them *my burden is light* and pleasant [m] to those who by

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

30

[1] *For I am meek*, condescending, *and lowly in heart.*] Some have apprehended that our Lord here intends peculiarly to recommend the imitation of his *humility* and *meekness*, as what would especially tend, in the natural consequence of things, to promote the *repose* and *tranquillity* of their minds; and Dr. Watts, in a very beautiful manner, has paraphrased the words thus in his Hymns. (Book I. Hymn 127.) But I apprehend our Lord chiefly means to remind them of the general *lenity* of his temper, which would engage him to decline all *grievous impositions* and unnecessary *burdens*, and tenderly to instruct them in the way to pardon and life. Compare Mat. xii. 19, 20. sect. li.

[m] *My burden is light* and pleasant.] Χρηστος, *easy*, may be also rendered *gentle* and *agreeable*; and so with great propriety may express that true pleasure and cheerfulness which are the genuine result of a sincere subjection to Christ's government, which is plainly the meaning of *taking his yoke*. (Compare Deut. xxviii. 47. 48. 1 Kings xii. 4; and Isa. x. 27.)—It is observable that the word yoke is particularly used for ceremonial impositions, Acts xv. 10, and Gal. v. 1; and the word burden is used in the same sense, Mat. xxiii. 4. Compare Mat. xvi. 19, and note [h] there, sect. lxxxviii. Ελαφρον properly signifies both *light* and *pleasant*; and

SECT. LIX. divine grace are engaged to submit to it. (Compare 1 John v. 3.)

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. XI. 21—24. WHAT can we imagine more dreadful than the guilt and condemnation of those who hear the gospel only to despise it! How can we read the doom of *Chorazin*, *Bethsaida*, and *Capernaum*, without trembling for ourselves, lest we should incur the like sentence! Such have been our religious advantages and opportunities, that, like them, we have indeed been *lifted up to heaven*: The *Lord* grant that we may not, by our misimprovement and disobedience, be *cast down to the lowest hell!* that *Tyre* and *Sidon*, and even *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, may not at last *rise up in judgment against us*, and call down on our heads *a punishment more intolerable* than *that* which has fallen upon *them*, or which they must even then feel!

Our vain *curiosity* may perhaps be ready to ask, Why were *these advantages* given to them that *abused* them, rather than to those who would have *improved* them better? But let us 26 impose upon our minds a reverential silence; since the great *Lord of heaven and earth giveth not an account of any of his matters*, (Job xxxiii. 13.) It is *so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight!*

25 Still we see the *gospel hid* from many who are esteemed the *wisest* and *most prudent* of mankind; and, blessed be *God*, we still see it *revealed* to some, who in comparison of them, are but *babes*. Let not this *offend us*; but rather taking our notions from the *word of God*, let us learn to *honour* these *babes* as possessed of the truest *wisdom*, and adore the riches of *Divine grace*, if we are in their number, while many of *superior capacities* are left to *stumble at this stone* till they fall into final ruin.

27 Whatever objections are brought against *Christ* and *his ways*, may we ever adhere to them, *since all things are delivered to him by the Father!* From him therefore may we seek the true *knowledge of God*, as ever we desire everlasting life!

28 We have all our *burdens* of *sin* and of *sorrow!* While we *labour* under them, let us with pleasure hear the *gentle* and melo- 29 dious *voice of a Redeemer*, thus *kindly inviting us to come unto him, that we may find rest to our souls.* Let us with pleasure subject ourselves to him, and go on in our holy course with that improvement and cheerfulness which become those who learn 30 by their own daily experience that *his commandments are not grievous*, and feel that *his yoke is easy and his burden is light.*

SECT. LX.

Jesus accepts an invitation to dine at a Pharisee's house, and vindicates the woman who anointed his feet there. Luke VII. 36, *to the end.*

LUKE VII. 36.

AND one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him: and he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

LUKE VII. 36.

AND one of the Pharisees who was present at this discourse,[a] and might feel himself touched by some insinuations which it contained, under a specious pretence of respect to our Lord, though as it seemed with an ensnaring design, *invited him to eat with him* that day, taking care to have others of his own sect present to observe what passed. And Jesus, being willing to express his condescension and candour, accepted his invitation; *and entering into the house of the Pharisee, he sat down to table*, without taking any notice of the omission of some usual ceremonies of respect which so great a guest might well have expected.

SECT. LX. Luke VII. 36.

37 And behold a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster-box of ointment;

And behold there was *a woman in that city who had* once *been a* great and scandalous *sinner*, and was still accounted infamous on account of the lewdness and debaucheries of her former life: and, *when she knew that he sat at meat in the Pharisee's house*, she took encouragement from his late gracious invitation, and determined to give a remarkable token of her reverence and love to so glorious and compassionate a Saviour; and for this purpose she *brought an alabaster vessel* full *of* richly *perfumed ointment*; *And standing* by the couch on which our Lord, according to the custom of those times, lay down to eat, waiting *behind* him in the posture of a servant *at his feet*, her very heart was melted with such pious remorse, that in the presence of the whole company she was unable to refrain from *weeping* in such great abundance, that *she began even to water his feet with a shower of tears*;[b] *and*, observing how wet they

38 And stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with

[a] *One of the Pharisees*, who was present at this discourse.] Dr. Whitby has abundantly proved *this* to be a *different story* from that of *Mary's anointing Christ's head* a little before his death; Mat. xxvi. 6—13, sect. cxlv.) And indeed the difference is so great and so plain, that it is astonishing so great a critic as Grotius should so confound them, and build so many remarks on that gross mistake.

[b] *To water his feet with a shower of tears.*] This is the proper signification of the word βρεχειν. Compare Mat. v. 45.—We are not to imagine she came with a purpose thus to *wash* and *wipe the feet of Christ*; but, probably bearing that the Pharisee

SECT. LX. were, she *wiped them with the* fine long *tresses* *of her hair*,[c] which she wore flowing loose about her shoulders; *and* then, to shew the warmth of her affection, *kissed his feet, and anointed them with the perfumed balsam* she brought with her, as not thinking herself worthy to pour it upon his head.

Luke VII. 38.

tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

39 *Now the Pharisee who had invited him, observing* [*this*,] which, according to the traditions they maintained, appeared to him a very indecent sight, was so offended, that he *said within himself, This man, if he were* really *a prophet*, as he pretends to be, *would* certainly *have known who and what kind of woman this* vile creature *is that* thus familiarly *toucheth him*, and would immediately have driven her away with a just disdain; *for she is* such *a* scandalous and filthy *sinner*, that her very touch is enough to pollute him.

39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him, saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, this man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him; for she is a sinner.

40 *And Jesus, in reply* to these uncharitable sentiments which he discerned at their first rising in his heart, *said to him, Simon, I have something to say to thee* on this occasion, which deserves thy regard. *And*, with an hypocritical profession of respect, *he says, O* thou great *Teacher*,[d] I am ready to attend; and whatsoever thou wouldest offer, *say* [*it freely.*] Then Jesus immediately delivered this parable as a just, yet mild reproof to his host; *A certain creditor had two debtors; one* of whom *owed* him *five hundred* denarii, or Roman *pence*,[e] *and the other*

40 And Jesus answering, said unto him Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor, which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.

who had invited Jesus to dinner had neglected the usual civility of anointing the head of his Divine guest, she was willing to supply the defect; and as she stood near Jesus, she was so *melted* with his discourse that she *shed* such a *flood of tears* as *wetted his feet*, which lay bare on the couch, his sandals being put off; and observing this, she *wiped them with her hair*, which she now wore *flowing loose* about her shoulders, as *mourners* commonly did; and then, not thinking herself worthy to *anoint his head*, poured out the liquid *perfume* on *his feet*. In this view all appears natural and unaffected.

women of pleasure used to nourish and plait it, and to set it off with garlands and jewels; to render themselves agreeable to their lovers.

[c] *With the tresses of her hair.*] So the word θριξι properly signifies; and the English word *tresses* might be derived from it. It is well known, that long hair was esteemed a great ornament in the female dress, (compare 1 Cor. xi. 15.) and

[d] *O Teacher.*] So διδασκαλε properly signifies, and I think expresses something more than the English word *master*, especially in the sense in which it is now commonly used. Whether this was mere hypocrisy, or whether it was intended as a sort of *sneer* on our Lord, who, though he professed himself so great a *teacher*, would allow this woman to use such freedoms with him, I pretend not certainly to say.

[e] *Five hundred* denarii, or Roman *pence.*] It is in the original δηναρια, which is well known to have been a Roman coin, in value about seven pence halfpenny of our money; so that five hundred of them were nearly equivalent to fifteen of our

SECT. LX.

Luke VII. 42.

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most;

owed him but *fifty: now as they had not any thing to pay*, so that neither of them could discharge any part of his debt, *he freely forgave them both* the whole of what they respectively owed: and upon this it may be reasonably expected that both would have some sense of his goodness; *say, therefore, which of them* do you think *would love him most? And Simon* very readily *replied, and said, I suppose*, so far as I can judge from the circumstances thou hast mentioned *that he to whom he forgave most* could not but have the greatest affection for him. *And* [*Jesus*] *said to him, thou hast judged* very *rightly*, and the reflection is evidently suited to the case that we have here before us.

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

43

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped *them with* the hairs of her head.

And turning himself *to the woman, he said to Simon* the Pharisee, *Thou seest this* poor afflicted *woman*, and canst not but take notice of the extraordinary tenderness and affectionate regard to me that she has now discovered. *I came into thine house* as a guest, on thine own express invitation, [*and*] *thou didst not give me any water to* [*wash*] *my feet*,[f] though that be so customary and necessary a refreshment on these occasions; *but she has* plentifully *watered my feet with* her *tears, and wiped them* even *with the tresses of her hair. Thou didst not* 45 *give me* the usual respect of *a kiss*, when I first came under thy roof;[g] *but she, ever since she came in*,[h] *has not ceased* with the greatest humility and affection, even *to kiss my feet. Thou* 46

44

45 Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46 Mine head with

guineas, and fifty to one guinea and an half.—There is no reason to believe, that there was any mystery intended in Christ's fixing on these sums rather than any others that had as great a difference between them.

[f] *Water to wash my feet.*] Drusius supposes this may be understood as if our Lord had said, "Thou didst not give "me so much as *water to wash my feet*; "whereas some guests have their feet "*washed with wine mingled with spices.*" Athenæus does indeed mention such an extravagance; but to be sure our Lord did not intend the least insinuation in favour of it.

[g] The usual respect of *a kiss*, &c.] How customary it was for the master of the house to receive his guests with such a salutation, to provide them with water to wash their feet, and to anoint their heads with oil, or some liquid perfume, the reader may see in many other commentators, and particularly in Calmet's Account of the Jewish Feasts.—It is possible, Simon might omit some of these civilities, lest his brethren who sat at table with him should think he paid Jesus too much respect; and, if there was any such *slight* intended, it might be an additional reason for our Lord's taking such particular notice of the neglect.

[h] *Ever since she came in.*] The evangelist so expressly tells us, that she heard of Christ's being at dinner with the Pharisee before she came in, (ver. 37.) that I make no doubt of following those copies which read it εισηλθεν, *she came in*, rather than those which have εισηλθον, in the first person, which our translation follows.

SECT. LX. Luke VII. 47.

didst not so much as *anoint my head with* common *oil*, though few entertainments fail of being attended with that circumstance;[i] *but she*, as thou seest, *has anointed* even *my feet with* this *precious* and fragrant *ointment*. *Wherefore I say unto thee*, and openly declare it both for her vindication and for thy admonition, *Her many sins*, which I well know have been exceeding heinous, *are* graciously *forgiven*; and *therefore*, as I have been the means of bringing her to repentance and peace, *she* has thus testified the high regard that she has to me, and *has loved* me *much*,[k] as being persuaded that she never can sufficiently express her sense of the obligation: *whereas* thou who art over-confident in thine own righteousness, lookest but slightly upon me; as *he to whom* but *little is forgiven*, or who thinks his debt was but small, is not so much affected with the kindness of the creditor that forgives him, and *loveth* him but *little*.

48 *And*, to renew the kind assurance of the pardon that before was granted to the woman, *he says to her*, in the presence of them all, I know the sincerity of thy repentance; and therefore now, for thy encouragement under this severe treatment, I solemnly declare that *thy sins are* 49 *forgiven*. *And they who were at table with him, began to say within themselves, Who is this* arrogant and presumptuous man, *that* not only transgresses our rules by permitting a harlot to touch him, but *even* presumes to say that he *forgiveth sins*, which is the peculiar prerogative of God himself? 50 *But*, far from recalling what he had said, *he* openly confirmed the consolation that he before had given, and *said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee*; and as the tenderness and love that thou hast shewn,

oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

48 And he saith unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

49 And they that sat at meat with him, began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

[i] *Anointed my head with oil*, though few entertainments fail, &c.] How common this circumstance was, may be judged, by comparing Deut. xxviii. 40; Mic. vi. 15; Psal. xxiii. 5; civ. 15; and cxli. 5.

[k] *Therefore she has loved* me *much*.] As passionately as Clarius opposes this rendering, and after all the immense pains Grotius has taken to find a sense in that which our translation follows, I cannot but think the connection evidently requires, that we should render ὅτι *therefore*, rather than *for* or *because*, how singular soever such a sense of the particle may be. And so it is, the Hebrew particle that answers it, is used in Hos. ix. 15. *All their iniquity is in Gilgal; for there I hated them*; or *therefore there I hated them*. For it cannot be supposed, that Israel is said to *sin in Gilgal, because he hated them there*; but on account of the iniquity which they committed there, *therefore* it was, that *there he hated them*. Our Lord by this answer plainly shewed his knowledge, both of their thoughts, and of her character.

have in a convincing, though silent manner, testified thy believing regards to me, under the extraordinary character I bear, *go thy way in* serenity and *peace*,[1] and enjoy the comfort of divine forgiveness, without afflicting thyself for the severity with which uncharitable men would treat thee. SECT. LX. Luke VII. 50.

IMPROVEMENT.

How joyful an *assurance* must this be to a soul thus bowed down and humbled in the very dust, under a sense of sin! How light did the *reproaches of men* sit upon her when she heard these *reviving words* from the mouth of the great *Saviour*, who alone had authority to pronounce them! Verse 50

Our hearts surely upbraid us with *many* and aggravated *sins*; but we hear the tidings of *pardon*: let us gladly embrace it; and acknowledging that not *five hundred pence*, nor even *ten thousand talents*, are sufficient to express the *greatness of our debt*, let us retain the *remembrance* of it, even when we hope that *God has forgiven it*; and let us labour, that the tenderness of our love, the warmth of our zeal, and the steadiness of our obedience, may in some measure be proportionable to it: and, *blessed Jesus*, how distinguished must they then be! 41, 42, 43

Let us with humble pleasure approach this compassionate *Friend of sinners*; who, though in one sense separate from them, yet thus freely and graciously encouraged *the chief of them* to apply to him, though he well knew *that condescension* would expose him to the *censure* of the self-conceited *Pharisee*. May God preserve us from that arrogant *confidence in our own righteousness*, which, while it leads us to *despise some*, perhaps much dearer to him than ourselves, would proportionably sink our value for the *Saviour*, and our *love* to him! 39, 47

As for what remains, let the *candour* with which *Christ* accepted this *invitation*; and the *gentleness* and *prudence* with which he behaved at this ensnaring entertainment, teach us to mingle the *wisdom of the serpent* with the *innocence* and sweetness *of the dove*; and neither absolutely to refuse all *favours*, nor severely to resent all *neglects*, from those whose friendship might at best be very *dubious*, and their *intimacy* by no means *safe*. 36

To conclude; let us avoid that very *ill temper* which *this Pharisee* shewed in *upbraiding* this poor humble *penitent* with 39

[1] *Go thy way in peace.*] This was an usual form of dismissing inferiors, and was an expression of the friendship and good wishes of the person speaking: (Gen. xliv. 17; Exod. iv. 18; 1 Sam. i. 17; 2 Sam. xv. 27; Mark v. 34; Luke viii. 48; and Jam. ii. 16.) Compare Luke ii. 29; p. 74. There is an apparent propriety in the phrase here, considering what had happened to discompose the tender spirit of this humble penitent.

SECT. LX. the *scandals* of her former life. Where we have reason to believe that *sin* has been lamented and forsaken, and consequently that *God has forgiven it*, let us cheerfully receive those whom *our holy Master* has not rejected; and if the remembrance of *former irregularities* cannot be entirely lost, let it only engage us to magnify the *riches of divine grace* towards such persons, and to rejoice with them in the display of it.

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Our Lord, attended by some pious women, takes another progress, in which he casts out a demon; and, having vindicated himself from the blasphemous charge of a combination with Satan, warns the Pharisees of the danger they were in of committing the unpardonable sin. LUKE VIII. 1—3. XI. 14, 15, 17—23. Mat. XII. 22—32. Mark III. 22—30.

LUKE VIII. 1.

SECT. LXI. Luke VIII. 1. *NOW*, in pursuance of the great design which Jesus had been prosecuting in his ministry wherever he had been, *it came to pass afterwards* (or after the events related above), *that he travelled through every city and village* in those parts; *preaching* in every place, *and publishing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God*, which he was now about to erect among the children of men; *and the twelve* apostles, whom he had lately chosen, *were with him*: he thought it proper they should be for some time, that they might be farther instructed for their work, and that their having been thus publicly seen in his train might promote their reception when they afterwards came to any of these places 2 by themselves. *And* there were also *some women* with him *who had been cured of* grievous disorders brought upon them by *evil spirits, and* of other *illnesses; [particularly,] Mary, who was called Magdalene*, from Magdala, the place of her residence;[a] a remarkable person, *out of whom had been cast* no less then *seven demons*,[b]

Luke VIII. 1. AND it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching, and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; and the twelve *were* with him:

2 And certain women which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

[a] *Called Magdalene*, from Magdala the place of her residence.] As Ιησους Ναζαρηνος, Jesus of Nazareth or Jesus the Nazarene, so Μαρια Μαγδαληνη, which we are used to render Mary Magdalene, might as well be rendered Mary the Magdalene, or Mary of Magdala, which was a town in Galilee beyond Jordan. See Mat. xv. 39.

[b] *Out of whom had been cast seven demons.*] This is supposed by Gregory to have been only a proverbial expression,

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who probably for the sins of her former life, were suffered by God to agitate and torment her in such a manner as to render her a spectacle of great horror. *And* there attended him besides, *Joanna, the wife of Chuza, a steward* in the court *of* king *Herod;* who yet did not think such an attendance beneath the dignity of her family: *and* one *Susannah, and many other* [*women*;] *who,* being persons of some considerable rank and circumstances in life, *assisted him with their possessions,* which they cheerfully employed to supply him and his disciples with necessaries, as occasion required.

Luke VIII. 3.

3 And Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others; which ministered unto him of their substance.

While he was making *then* this tour about Galilee and the neighbouring parts, *there was brought to him one possessed by a demon,*[c] who had been rendered by this means both *blind and dumb: and he* immediately expelled the evil spirit, and *cured him* that had been so miserably afflicted by it; *so that it came to pass,* that *when the demon was gone out* at the command of Jesus, *the* person that but just before was *blind and dumb, both spake and saw.*[d]

Mat. XII. 22.

MAT. XII. 22. Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb: and he healed him; insomuch that [it came to pass, when the devil was gone out,] the blind and dumb both spake and saw. [LUKE XI. 14—]

And all the multitude of *people* round him, perceiving he had healed the poor distressed creature in an instant, *were astonished* at the sight, *and said, Is not this the* Messiah, the long expected *Son of David?*

23

23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David? [LUKE XI.—14.]

But the Pharisees who were with him, *and* particularly *the scribes, who came down from Je-*

24

24 But when the Pharisees, [and the scribes which came down from Jerusa-

to signify that she was a person of a very bad character, whom Jesus reclaimed; and Mr. L'Enfant advances the same interpretation, as agreeable to the Jewish style: but, as so much is spoken of dispossessions in the proper sense of the word by Luke, it is most natural to suppose this to be referred to here.—Some have thought she was the sinner mentioned Luke vii. 37, but there is no certain proof of it. And the conjecture of those, who suppose her to be the sister of Lazarus, whose husband might have lived at Magdala, is rather more improbable: since when Luke and John mention Mary of Bethany, they never intimate that it was Mary Magdalene. See Calmet's Dictionary.

Mat. xiii. 1, *&c. seq.* § lxv.) and on the evening of which he *crossed the sea, and stilled the tempest,* and went into the country of the Gadarenes, where he *dispossessed the legion.* (See Mark iv. 35, & *seq.* § lxix.) This is the reason of introducing it here, as most critics do; and no other story, not yet inserted, can claim a place before it; therefore Matthew and Luke, in their different order, are transposed to agree with Mark on that grand foundation laid down in note [k] on Mark i. 18, p. 192.

[c] *Then there was brought to him one possessed by a demon.*] This miracle appears to have been performed on the morning of that day on which Christ delivered the parables of the sower, &c. (compare

[d] *The blind and dumb both spake and saw.*] We have before observed that κωφος often signifies both *deaf and dumb*, (see note [k] on Luke i. 22, p. 35;) but, as it is not said that Christ gave this man his *hearing*, it is plain he was not *deaf*. And indeed it appears worthy of remark, that we hardly ever meet with entire blindness and deafness in the same person.

SECT. LXI. Mat. XII. 24.

rusalem, and still attended his progress to make their remarks on what passed, *hearing* [*this*] natural reflection of the people, and fearing lest their own credit should sink among them, as that of Jesus advanced, gave the most malicious and unreasonable turn to the matter which can be imagined; for they *said*, *This* is so bad a [*man*,] and so notoriously transgresses the traditions of the elders, and the law of God,[e] that he *is* certainly himself *possessed by Beelzebub, and does not cast out demons but* only *by* a secret combination with *Beelzebub*; who being *the prince* [*or*] *chief of the demons*,[f] with a view to confirm his own interest, expels other inferior spirits under his command, at the word of this Jesus, who therefore deserves to be put to death as a magician, (Exod. xxii. 18.) rather than to be thus extolled as the Messiah.

lem,] heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* [hath Beelzebub, and doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince [Luke, or the chief] of the devils. [Mark III. 22. —Luke XI. 15.]

25 *And, Jesus knowing their thoughts* though, he was not within hearing of these reflections, *called them to* come near *him, and said to them in* the following *parabolical expressions*, before all the people, *How can* you possibly imagine that, in such circumstances as these, *Satan*

25 And Jesus knew their thoughts [and he called them unto him] and said unto them [in parables, How can Satan cast

[e] So notoriously transgresses the traditions of the elders and the law of God.] There is sufficient reason to conclude that the Pharisees must go on this principle in this random charge, which had not the least shadow of a proof; and it was usual with them to esteem a contempt of their traditions as equally criminal with the most express contempt of the law. It is also well known, that they charged Christ both with *sabbath-breaking* and *blasphemy*.

[f] *Beelzebub, the prince, or chief of the demons.*] There is no doubt, but this was spoken by the Jews, not merely in a general way of *a prince of the demons*, or of one of their chiefs, but in particular of him whom they considered as *the prince* of the powers of darkness: for in Mark it is τον αρχοντα, though Matthew and Luke express it without the article: and the following words shew, he was supposed to be the same with Satan, the grand adversary. One of the titles given him was *Beelzebub*, or *Baal-zebub*; and a Philistine idol who had his temple at Ekron, (and is supposed by some to answer to the Grecian Pluto, Jurieu, Hist. des Dogmes, p. 631.) was plainly called by this name. (See 2 Kings i. 2, 3.) which is well known to signify *The lord of flies*; this idol being worshipped, as some tell us, under the figure of a *fly* or *beetle* as defending people from these insects; though others think it may allude to the vast multitude of flies with which the slaughter of their sacrifices was infested in the heathen temples, while (as the Jews report) no fly was ever seen to come upon the flesh of any sacrifice in the temple at Jerusalem. (See Selden. de Diis Syris, Syntag. ii. cap. 6.) But why the Jews should speak of him under this title as *the chief of the devils*, it is difficult to say; unless (as Heinsius conjectures, rather than proves) the Hebrew word Zebus signified *a deadly kind of insect*, whose sting was mortal, and which was therefore looked upon as a fit emblem of the mischievous hosts, commanded by this *prince of the power of the air*.—The title in the Greek is Βεελζεβουλ, *Beelzebul*, which signifies *The lord of a dunghill*, and seems to be a contemptuous change of the former name, by which it was intimated, that the noblest of the heathen deities were fitter to dwell on a dunghill, than to be worshipped in a magnificent *temple*.

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Mat. XII. 25.

out Satan? Every kingdom divided against itself [cannot stand, *but*] is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand, [LUKE, *but* falleth.] [MARK III. 23—25. LUKE XI. 17.]

should *cast out Satan*?[g] It may surely be laid down as a maxim, That *every kingdom divided against itself, cannot* long *subsist* in flourishing circumstances, [*but*] quickly sinks into contempt, and *is brought to* utter *desolation; and every* smaller society, if it be but a *city, or* a single *family, divided against itself, shall not* long *stand*, [*but*] *falleth* into inevitable ruin. *And* therefore *if Satan rise up against himself,*

26 And if Satan [rise up against himself and] cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? [he cannot stand, but hath an end;] [LUKE, because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.] [MARK III. 26. LUKE XI. 18.]

26 as he certainly does, if he join with me to confirm a doctrine so evidently opposite to his nature, and subversive of his kingdom; *and* if he assist in such a cause to *cast out Satan*;[h] it will be evident from hence, that *he is divided against himself*; and *how then shall his kingdom subsist?* It plainly follows that, in such a case, *he cannot stand, but has* contributed himself to put *a* speedy *period* to his own kingdom. But, as you never can suppose, that such a crafty and sagacious spirit would in so weak a manner hasten his own confusion and defeat, you therefore, upon this account, must give up that uncharitable inconsistent charge, you have been ready to insinuate and urge against me, and must appear to have been guilty of the most extravagant absurdity, *because you* scruple not to *say, that I cast out demons by* the help of *Beelzebub.*

27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast

And if indeed you will be still so obstinate as 27 to assert, that *I cast out demons by* the assistance of *Beelzebub*, you may as well say, that all miracles of this kind are thus performed; and I may particularly refer you to determine, *by whom do your* own *children expel them*, who

[g] *Satan* should *cast out Satan.*] This answer of our Lord demonstratively proves, that Beelzebub and Satan are names for the same person; and, consequently, that Satan was considered as the prince of those demons who were cast out by Christ, and who are elsewhere represented as his angels; so that it must disprove every hypothesis inconsistent with this assertion.—It may not be improper to add here, that the Jewish rabbies call every demon by the name of Satan, and often use the name in the plural number. So they call Sammael, which is but another name for Beelzebub, ROSH KOL HASSATANIM, the head or prince of all the Satans. See Casaubon in loc.

[h] In such a cause to *cast out Satan.*] It is certain, (as many good writers have observed,) that the force of this argument consists in a tacit appeal to the *genius* and *design of his doctrine*; which evidently appeared so friendly to the interest of true religion, and so destructive to idolatry and vice in which the kingdom of Satan consisted, that he must really be *his own enemy*, and rise up for the subversion of *his own cause*, before he could become an associate with Jesus. See Archbishop Tillotson's Works, Vol. III. p. 515.

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practise exorcisms,[f] and are approved and extolled by you on that account, though some of them do it in my name? *Therefore they shall* Mat. XII. 28. in this respect *be your judges*, and condemn you of a most partial and unequal conduct. *But if* you must allow, that *I cast out demons by the finger*, [*or*] *the* power and *Spirit of God, then* it *undoubtedly* follows, that *the kingdom of God is* indeed *come unto you*, as I assert; and all the doctrines that I preach, are proved by this to be divine, and consequently worthy of your most serious and obedient regard, since it plainly shews my superiority over all the infernal powers.

them out? therefore they shall be your judges. [LUKE XI. 19.]

28 But if I cast out devils by [the finger, *or*] the Spirit of God, then [no doubt] the kingdom of God is come unto you. [LUKE XI. 20.]

29 *Otherwise*, it is evident I could not do this: for *how can any one* break and *enter into the house of a strong man, and plunder his goods*, while he is actually present to guard them,[k] *unless he first* overpower and *bind the strong man*, who will be sure to do all he can to defend them! *and then* indeed, *he may plunder his house* of whatever he pleases; but without this, it will be utterly impossible to do it. And therefore it is plain, from all these instances of dispossessions, that I have power over Satan to controul and bind him, and consequently that I act by a divine commission.

29 Or else, how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house. [MARK III. 27.]

Luke XI. 21. But still it is not to be thought, the contest will be carried on without an opposition from the enemy, nor can it fail of giving some alarm: for *while a strong man, completely armed*,[l] *guards his* castle or *palace* from invasion and

LUKE XI. 21. When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace.

[f] *By whom do your* own *children expel them*, who practise exorcisms, &c.] For the proof of this fact, see Acts xix. 13; Mark ix. 38; Luke ix. 49. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. viii. cap. 2. § 5, p. 420. Havercamp, and Dr. Whitby's note; but above all that of Grotius on this passage. I do not see that there is any need of referring this to the apostles who had not yet been sent out; and if they had, they to be sure would be involved in the *same censure* with *Christ*.—It is more natural to suppose, that the disciples of the Pharisees are here probably meant by *their children*.

[k] While he is actually present to guard them.] Thus the course of the argument plainly supposes, and the case in question proved *the presence of Satan*.

[l] *While a strong man*, &c.] The reader will observe, that (contrary to most others,) I have introduced in this section Luke xi. 15—23, as parallel to Mat. xii. 22—30, and Mark iii. 22—27. The reason is, because as there appeared to me no certain evidence that the *miracle* and *discourse* recorded by Matthew were afterwards repeated at another time, (see note [a] on Luke xi. 37, sect. cx.) so I was not willing to insert so long a discourse twice: yet it is not impossible it might occur again; and if any, on the whole, judge it most probable it did, they may turn back from thence, and read these verses again.—I likewise thought that the discourse, with the additions from Luke, appeared most complete and beautiful.

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attack, *his goods are in* a profound *peace*,[m] and his prisoners hard as their situation may be, are afraid to make any attempt to regain their liberty; and such is the quiet, which there seems to be, while Satan reigns without any controul.

Luke XI. 22.

22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon *him*, and overcome him, he taketh *from him* all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

22 *But when one stronger than he*, or of more power than the warrior I have mentioned, *invades* his garrison, *and conquers him, he takes away all his complete armory, in which he placed his confidence, and distributes his spoils* among his followers. So shall you see the infernal powers yet more completely baffled and spoiled by me, and my faithful servants adorned by the trophies won from them.

Mat. XII. 30. He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad. [Luke XI. 23.]

Mat. XII. 30.

While therefore you are animated from such views, you ought not to allow yourselves even in a state of neutrality and indifference: for I must tell you, That *he that is not* cordially *with me* as a friend, *is* indeed *against me*,[n] and will accordingly be treated as one that is an enemy to me; *and he that does not* set himself according to his ability to *gather* subjects into my kingdom *with me, is* but vainly and foolishly *scattering abroad*, and, however otherwise employed, wastes his time and labour in what will at last turn to no solid account.[o] Much more criminal and fatal then, must the character and conduct of those be, who with deliberate implacable malice oppose my cause, and are resolved at all adventures, to do their utmost to bear it down, as you are attempting to do by these vile insinuations, which you have now suggested.

31 Wherefore [verily] I say unto you,

31 I therefore give you the most solemn and compassionate warning of your danger; for you are on the brink of a most dreadful precipice. That malignity of heart which leads you to ascribe

[m] *His goods are in* a profound *peace.*] Our Lord here, (as also Luke x. 17—20, sect. cvi.) evidently takes occasion, from having spoken of dispossessions, to turn his discourse to that grand and complete victory over Satan, of which these miracles were a specimen; and these words refer, not to demoniacs, who were far from being in peace or quiet, but to the case of sinners who by the arts of Satan are lulled into a state of security and confidence, while in the hands of their greatest enemy, and in the way to final destruction.

[n] *He that is not with me, is against me.*] How this is to be reconciled with Luke ix. 50. see the note there, sect. xcvi.

[o] Wastes his time and labour in what will at last turn to no solid account.] This is a more natural sense, than to take it as if our Lord had said, *He that does not gather subjects into my kingdom, disperses them.* According to the interpretation I have given, it is a most noble maxim of Divine wisdom; and happy is the minister, happy the man, who attends to it.

SECT. LXI.

Mat. XII. 31.

these works of mine to a confederacy with Satan, may incline you to pass the same impious sentence on the greatest and fullest confirmation, which is to be given to my gospel, by the effusion of the Spirit on my followers: and *therefore*, to prevent, if possible, such guilt and ruin, *verily I say unto you*, That *all* other *sins shall be forgiven to the children of men, and* even [*all*] the other *blasphemies with which they shall blaspheme; but the blasphemy against the Spirit* of God, in this most glorious dispensation of it,[p] *shall not be forgiven to* those impious and incorrigible *men*, who shall dare to impute to diabolical operation, those glorious works of Divine power and goodness. *And* I add, That *whosoever speaks a* contemptuous and impious *word* even *against the Son of man* himself, while here on earth in this obscure form, he may possibly be brought to repentance for it, and so, *it shall be forgiven him*; and consequently even your case, bad as it is, is not entirely hopeless: *but whosoever shall* maliciously *speak* any thing of this nature *against the Holy Spirit*, when the grand dispensation of it shall open, in those miraculous gifts and operations, that will be attended with the most evident demonstrations of his mighty power, *it shall never be forgiven him* at all, *either in this world, or in that* which is *to come*;[q] *but he is obnoxious to eternal damnation*, and must irrecoverably sink

[All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies, wherewith soever they shall blaspheme;] but the blasphemy *against the Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. [MARK III. 28.]

32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come; [hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation.] [MARK III. 29.]

[p] *The blasphemy against the Spirit* of God in this most glorious dispensation of it.] After all that Archbishop Tillotson has said, (Vol. i. Serm. 17.) to prove that *the sin against the Holy Ghost* was *that* which *these Pharisees* committed, in ascribing *the miracles of Christ to Satan*, I have rather chosen to take the words in Dr. Whitby's sense; and must beg leave to refer to his paraphrase on the places above, and to his excellent dissertation on the subject, in his fourth Appendix to Matthew, for the reasons which induced me to such a judgment.

[q] *It shall never be forgiven him* at all, *either in this world, or in that* which is *to come*.] It is observed both by Lightfoot and Grotius, that through a fond imagination of the final happiness of all the seed of Abraham, the Jews supposed there were some sins that had not been *forgiven here* that would *be expiated by death*, and be *forgiven after it*; and that our Lord designed by this expression to assure them, that there was no forgiveness to be had for those that should be guilty of this sin, either before, or after death: and that their expectations of forgiveness then, would prove no other than a deceitful dream. (See Lightfoot's Hor. Hebr. and Grotius in loc.) But it is clearly shewn by Dr. Whitby, that this was used as a proverbial expression; and that it only signified *a thing should never be*, when it was said, *It shall not be, either in this world, or the world to come*.—However, as some think, that it refers to the Messiah's kingdom, which was often called *the age to come*, I have also hinted at that sense; which is indeed included in the other, but does not seem to me to be so properly applied here; for if our interpretation be right, the sin could not be committed till that age commenced.

into it; nor will all the grace of the gospel, in its fullest display, afford a remedy for so aggravated a crime, or furnish him with means for his conviction and recovery. SECT. LXI.

MARK III. 30. Because they said He hath an unclean spirit.

This admonition he gave them with such repeated solemnity, *because they* had maliciously *said he hath an unclean spirit*, and performs these miraculous works by the assistance of Beelzebub. Mark III. 30.

IMPROVEMENT.

How *condescending* was the conduct of the blessed *Jesus*, while he dwelt among us! Though he was *Lord of all*, he not only waved the pompous manner of subsisting by continued *miracles*, but likewise declined to *dwell* with the *rich* and the *great*, with whom he could easily have secured to himself a constant abode.[r] He chose a laborious *itinerant course*, and subsisted chiefly on the *bounty* of a few *pious women*, whose company and friendship he did not despise. *That subsistence* was most pleasing to him, which was the greatest testimony of the *respect* and *affection* of his *hearers*, and at the same time gave the greatest opportunity to testify his own *humility* and *self-denial*, and to pursue his schemes for public usefulness. So may his *followers*, and especially his *ministers*, always judge! And may all the *great things* they *seek for themselves*, be such as lie on the *other side of the grave*, and are to be enjoyed in the presence of our *glorified Master!* Luke viii. 1—3.

We have seen another *triumph of Christ* over the *evil spirit*, another of those glorious and delightful instances in which the great *Captain of our salvation*, with superior strength, *bound the strong man, and spoiled his goods*. May the *victory* still be carried on *to perfection!* May his *merciful alarms* break that dangerous and fatal *peace*, in which the *slaves of Satan* are for a while detained, that he may with greater advantage, and greater terror, plunge them into final and eternal *ruin!* And, in such a *contest*, may we abhor *neutrality!* With pleasure and zeal let us *list ourselves* under the *Redeemer's banners*, that we may share *his trophies!* And, while others are throwing away their time, their labour, and their souls, may we, by *gathering with him*, secure to ourselves *everlasting riches!* Mat. xii. 22. 29. Luke xi. 21, 22. 23

We must surely be *astonished*, to hear of that perverse and malignant *interpretation*, which these wretches put on such Mat. xii. 24.

[r] The *rich*, and the *great*, with whom he could easily have secured to himself a constant abode.] Undoubtedly, to mention no more the centurion (who had wealth and generosity enough to erect a synagogue at his own charge, Luke vii. 5, p. 288.) would have been very willing to have received into his house a single Person of so extraordinary a character, so perfectly temperate, and so easy as to the common accommodations of life: but Christ came to bring the gospel to the poor; and the purposes of his mission required frequent removes.

SECT. LXI. convincing *miracles*: and it must move our *indignation* to see the *Son of God* maliciously charged as an *associate with Satan*. *If they have* thus *called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household?* (Mat. x. 25.) Let us learn to imitate that *meekness of wisdom*, with which the *blessed Jesus* pursues his *vindication*. Oh that *his followers* had ever traced it! Yea, I had almost said, Oh that they had learned, even from the *union of confederate enemies*, the *danger* of that *house* or *kingdom*, which is unnaturally *divided against itself!*

Mat. XII. 26.

It is matter of great *thankfulness*, thus expressly to hear that *every* other *sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven*; but *awful* to think, that the *blasphemy against the Holy Ghost* is excepted. Let those, who, while they cannot deny the *facts of Christianity*, despise and oppose its *doctrines*, tremble to think how near they approach to the boundaries of *this sin*, which is perhaps more *obscurely described*, that we may more *cautiously avoid* all such approaches. But let not the *humble soul*, that *trembles at God's word*, meditate *terror* to itself from such a passage; which, when viewed in its *due connection*, cannot, with any shadow of reason, be thought to belong to any who do not *obstinately reject the gospel*, and *maliciously oppose it*, when made known to them with its *fullest evidence*.

31, 32

SECT. LXII.

Our Lord goes on to caution the Pharisees of the danger of such sinful words; and answers to the exclamation of the woman, who extolled the happiness of his mother. Mat. XII. 33—37. Luke XI. 27, 28.

MAT. XII. 33.

SECT. LXII. WHEN our Lord had thus faithfully warned the Pharisees of the danger they were in of incurring unpardonable guilt, by blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, he proceeded to inforce the admonition in the following manner: Attentively consider what I have offered to you, and either lay aside your vain and hypocritical pretences to religion, or quit that malignity and wickedness which render these pretences insolent and odious: *either make the tree good, and* shew it to be so by making *its fruit* also *good*; [a]

Mat. XII. 33.

MAT. XII. 33. EITHER make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by *his* fruit.

[a] *Make the tree good*, &c.] The sense I have chosen is that which seems to agree best with what follows. I could not acquiesce in that of Mr. L'Enfant, who supposes it as if he should have said, *Either allow me to be good, or prove the casting out devils to be evil*; for that would suppose, every one who *casts out devils*, *to be a good man*. Zegerus and Grotius understand it as if our Lord had said, "Since you cannot but allow, that *my* "*life*, and the tendency of *my Doctrine* are "*good*, be not so inconsistent with your-"selves as to suppose, I am *a confederate* "*with Beelzebub*." And it is indeed very possible that *this* may be the sense.

SECT. LXII.

Mat. XII. 34.

or else make, and allow, *the tree* to be *corrupt*, *and its fruit* also *corrupt*, if it in fact appear to be so: *for the tree is* to be *known by the fruit* it produces, which is an infallible proof of what quality it is. (Compare Mat. vii. 17, 18, sect. xiii.) O *ye* abominable *brood of vipers*, ye perverse, venomous, deceitful creatures, *how can you, who are* so *wicked* yourselves, *speak good things?* It is surely a force upon nature whenever you do it; and you will easily return to such uncharitable and impious language as we have now been hearing from you; *for the mouth* naturally *speaks out of the* overflowing *abundance of the heart.* And thus, on the one hand, *a good man, out of the good treasure of the heart,* freely and abundantly *produces good things*, and scatters the seeds of wisdom and piety in the minds of all with whom he converses: *and* on the other hand, *a wicked man*, being full of corrupt affections, and a secret malignity against religion, *out of the evil treasure* of his heart, as naturally *brings forth evil things;* and, even when he labours most artfully to disguise himself and his character, breaks out like you, in some unguarded moment, into such language as betrays the shame he would conceal. (Compare Luke vi. 43—45, sect. liv.)

34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

But take heed how you suffer your tongues to run on in this profane and licentious manner; for *I* solemnly *declare unto you, That in the* awful *day of* the final and universal *judgment, men shall give* a strict and impartial *account for every unprofitable*, and much more for every pernicious *word*,[b] *which they shall speak:*

36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

[b] *For every unprofitable, and much more for every pernicious word.*] Though the terms *inconvenient* and *unprofitable*, are sometimes applied to things capable of much worse epithets; (compare Rom. i. 28; Eph. v. 4, 11. Tit. iii. 9; and Heb. xiii. 17.) yet I cannot think, that our Lord here uses ἀργον, *idle*, merely to signify *mischievous*. We are certainly accountable for useless, as well as wicked discourses, and they will be taken into that last survey, which is to determine our character and state; which they, whose life is one continued scene of whim or sneering raillery, would do well seriously to consider. And it was to our Lord's purpose to observe it here, as it inferred, by the strongest consequence, the danger of such vile and criminal discourse as those of the Pharisees in this case. But discourse tending, by innocent mirth, to exhilarate the spirits, is not idle discourse; as the time spent in necessary recreation is not idle time; nor does a wise and gracious God expect from men the *life of angels*. The Jews about Kimchi's time, had a proverb among them, That *a scholar may be improved even by the idle words of his master*; but I think Hemsius had no reason to value himself so much as he seems to do, on his attempt to explain these words of Christ, as an *allusion to that*.—If any, on the whole, are dissatisfied with the

SECT. LXII.

and wo be to them who have used that noble faculty of speech only to vain or to wicked purposes. *For* let every particular hearer apply it to himself: it is not by thine actions alone, but in some degree *by thy words, thou shalt* at last *be justified, or by thy words thou shalt be* then *condemned*;[c] as by the tenor of these the disposition of thy heart is shewn, and thy true character discovered.

Mat. XII. 37. 37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

Luke XI. 27. *And while he was speaking these things*,[d] *a certain* pious *woman* was so transported with a mixture of pleasure at hearing his words, and indignation at the unworthy treatment he met with from his adversaries, that she could not forbear *lifting up her voice*, and, crying out *from amidst the crowd*,[e] she *said unto him*, O thou Divine Teacher, *Happy is the womb* of her *that bare thee, and* thrice happy *the breasts which thou didst suck!* with what unspeakable delight must thy blessed mother look on so illustrious a Son!

LUKE XI. 27. And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lift up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked!

28 *But he* modestly and seriously *replied, Nay, rather happy are they who hear the word of God* which I preach, *and keep it* in their hearts as a vital principle of holy obedience; for they will be entitled to eternal blessings, infinitely more valuable than any natural relation to me would give, or any opportunities of the most intimate converse with me, separate from such a practical regard to my instructions.

28 But he said, Yea, rather blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

IMPROVEMENT.

Luke XI. 27. WHOSE heart does not echo back the *exclamation* of *this* pious *woman*? Yet who does not too frequently forget that weighty and important *answer* which succeeded it? Let us not only

account of things here given, I would beg leave to ask them, whether *unprofitable talk* be not *a sinful wasting of time*? and whether that must not render a man in some degree criminal before God?

[c] *Or by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*] Since both the clauses in this verse cannot belong to the *same person*, it is plain that καὶ here, as the Hebrew particle *Ve* in many places, is put for the alternative *Or*: and agreeable to this we find, that instead of καὶ, the particle ἢ is here inserted in many ancient copies.

[d] *While he was speaking these things.*] Luke brings in this story at the end of the parable of the *relapsing demoniac*, which was delivered just at the conclusion of the discourse before related. And though it is uncertain, at what exact time this exclamation was made, yet what was now said might be a proper occasion for it; or if it be a little transposed, the reader will excuse it as it serves for a fit appendix to this short section, and likewise prevents the more unequal length of the following.

[e] *From amidst the crowd.*] So ἐκ τοῦ ὄχλου plainly signifies; and it may thus, I think, be very properly connected with the words which follow it in the original.

hear, but *keep the word of Christ*; and we shall thus be *happy* SECT. in a nearer *union* with him than ever could arise from any *na-* LXII. *tural relation* to him, and shall ere long have opportunities of more noble, and more delightful converse with him, than those with which *the virgin Mary* herself was honoured, during the time of his abode on earth.

Let us especially attend to those instructions we have here received, and judge of ourselves *by our fruits*; never flattering Mat. ourselves that our *hearts* are *good*, if our *lives* are *abominable* XII. 33. *and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate*; (Tit. i. 16.) And in particular let us remember, that not our *actions* only, but the *fruits of our lips*, are to be brought into the solemn *account* 36 which we must give to the great *Judge of all the earth*; and that *the day* is coming, when all our *idle* and *unprofitable talk*, which has proceeded *from the evil treasure* of a *depraved heart*, will 37 undergo a strict examination, and we must answer not for our *actions* only, but *shall be justified* or *condemned* by our *words*. And, if *foolish* and *wicked speeches* are to be accounted for in the *day of judgment*, let us *set a watch on the door of our lips* to prevent them; and labour daily to use our *tongue* so, that it may indeed be, as it is *in scripture* called, *our glory*. (Psal. xvi. 9; xxx. 12.)

For that purpose, let it be our great care, to lay up *a good trea-* 35 *sure* of Christian knowledge and experience *in our hearts*; that while too many are poisoning those that are round about them with erroneous principles and vicious discourses, *the opening of our lips* may be of *righteous things*; and we may still be ready, upon all proper occasions, with freedom, variety, and spirit, to *bring forth good and profitable things from the good treasure of our hearts*; which may be *edifying* unto those that hear us, and may go from one *heart* to another. So will *the Lord* himself *hearken* with pleasure unto what we *speak*, and exactly record it in the *book of remembrance* that is *written before him*; and, producing it at last to our public honour, will own us for *his, in the day when he makes up his jewels*. (Mal. iii. 16, 17.)

SECT. LXIII.

Our Lord upbraids the Pharisees with their perverseness in asking a farther sign; and delivers the parable of the relapsing demoniac. Mat. XII. 38—45. Luke XI. 16, 24—26, 29—32.

MAT. XII. 38.

MAT. XII. 38. THEN certain of the scribes, and of the Pharisees an-

THEN some of the Scribes and Pharisees who SECT. were present, hearing how plainly Christ LXIII. admonished, and how severely he rebuked them, *answered* him, by diverting the discourse to an- Mat. XII. 38.

SECT. LXIII.

Mat. XII. 38.

other topic; [*and*] with a view *to try him, demanded of him a sign from heaven, saying, Master*, thou professest thyself a teacher of extraordinary authority, and we may justly expect some proportionable proof of it: now these supposed dispossessions which we have lately seen or heard of, are so liable to fraud and collusion, that *we* cannot fully acquiesce in them; but *would* gladly *see a* more remarkable and convincing *sign from thee*, and particularly some such celestial appearance[a] as several of our ancient prophets gave.

swered, [tempting *him, and* sought of him a sign from heaven,] saying Master, we would see a sign from thee. [LUKE XI. 16.]

39. *But when the multitude was gathered in a crowd* about him, eager to hear what Jesus would reply to this demand, and ready to conclude that he would now perform some wondrous and peculiar kind of miracle, *he answered and said to them, This is an evil and adulterous generation*,[b] a very perverse and degenerate people, [*that*] amidst such convincing miracles as I am daily performing in the most public manner, still *seeks after a* farther *sign: but no* such *sign* as their bold curiosity prescribes *shall be given them, unless* [*it be*] that one yet greater miracle, which I may not improperly call *the sign of the prophet Jonah*,[c] because it bears so great a resemblance to that miraculous occurrence that will be seen hereafter with respect to me. *For as Jonah was a sign to the Nine-*

Luke XI. 30.

vites,[d] and was miraculously sent among them

39 But [when the people were gathered thick together,] he answered, and said to them, [This is] an evil and adulterous generation, [*which*] seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. [LUKE XI. 29.]

LUKE XI. 30. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites,

[a] Some such celestial appearance.] The words of Luke expressly fix it to this sense, and Matthew, in another story of this kind (Mat. xvi. 1. sect. lxxxvii,) expressly tells us, they demanded *a sign from heaven*. (Compare also Mark viii. 11.) It is not therefore to be understood of a *sign* only of *deliverance from the* Roman *yoke*, or of the *erection of the Messiah's temporal kingdom*, as some have supposed, but rather of some *miracle* performed in the visible heavens, where, they seem to have thought, impostors had less power than on earth. (Compare John vi. 30.)—And they might probably conclude, they had the better excuse for making such a proposal, as Moses, (Exod. ix. 22—24;) Joshua, (Josh. x. 12;) Samuel, (1 Sam. vii. 9, 10;) and Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 36—38; and 2 Kings i. 10;) had given such signs. (Compare Isa. xii. 11; and xxxviii. 8.) See Vitring. Observ. sacr. lib. 2. cap. 16.

[b] *Adulterous generation.*] This plainly signifies a *spurious race*, degenerated from the piety of their ancestors. Compare Isa. lvii. 3, 4; Psal. cxliv. 7, 8; and John viii. 39, *& seq.*

[c] *Unless it be the sign of the prophet Jonah.*] As the *resurrection of Christ* was attended with the appearance of a descending angel, it was with greater exactness than is generally observed, the very thing that these Pharisees demanded, *a sign from heaven*.

[d] *For as Jonah was a sign*, &c.] The attentive reader may easily observe that some passages of the eleventh chapter of St. Luke are transposed in this section. But I will not insist on the necessity of doing it, since it is very possible, the same words might be repeated again: but there is so very small a variation, and the discourse is so long, that I chose to unite all the three evangelists, as far as might be, into one compound text.

so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

Mat. XII. 40. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas;

SECT. LXIII.

Luke XI. 30. Mat. XII. 40.

by means of an unparalleled deliverance from the most imminent danger; *so also shall the Son of man*, by a yet more surprising Divine interposition in his favour, *be* made a very illustrious sign *to this generation*. *For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish* that swallowed him,[e] and yet afterwards came out alive and unhurt; *so shall the Son of man*, after he has been slain by the infidelity and cruelty of those to whom he comes, *be* part of *three days and three nights*[f] *in the heart of the earth*, and on the third day shall, with the ministry of an angel in a visible form descending from heaven, burst the bands of death, and come forth from the tomb living and triumphant.

41 And, by a natural consequence, *the men of Nineveh shall rise up in* the final *judgment with this generation*,[g] *and*, by the circumstances of their case when viewed together, *shall* plead against it, and *condemn it*, as far more inexcusable than they; *for they repented* in the very dust *at the preaching of Jona*, though he made them but a transient visit, and wrought no miracle in their presence to confirm his mission;

The reader who chuses to follow Luke's order exactly, will find a memorandum (Vol. II. sect. cx, note [a]) of the place where this paragraph comes in according to that; and I must, on the whole, leave it among some other passages in the evangelists, where it is neither possible, nor important, to determine the exact series.

[e] *In the belly of the great fish.*] It is no where said in the Old Testament that Jonah was swallowed by *a whale*; and it is the less probable, as *whales* are seldom found in the Mediterranean, and as the gullet of a whale is said to be so small, as not to be capable of receiving even the head of a man. It is therefore much more probable it was a shark, or some other great fish, which it is said, *the Lord had prepared to swallow up Jonah*: (Jonah i. 17.) And the word κητος in Greek, (as well as TANIM in Hebrew,) may signify any *large fish*, as some of the Greek lexicographers have observed.

[f] Part of *three days and three nights.*] It is of great importance to observe (as many good writers have done,) that the easterns reckoned any part of a day of twenty-four hours for a whole day; and say a thing was done after three or seven days, &c. if it was done on the third or seventh day from that last mentioned. (Compare 1 Kings xx. 29; 2 Chron. x. 5, 12; and Luke ii. 21.) And as the Hebrews had no word exactly answering to the Greek νυχθημερον, to signify *a natural day of twenty-four hours*, they use *night and day*, or *day and night*, for it. So that to say a thing happened *after three days and three nights*, was the same as to say it happened *after three days*, or *on the the third day*. (Compare Esth. iv. 16: with v. 1; Gen. vii. 4—12; Exod. xxiv. 18; and xxxiv. 28.) See the Miracles of Jesus vindicated, p. 6—8.

[g] *Rise up in judgment with this generation.*] Some think there is a reference in this expression to the custom of witnesses rising up to give their testimony; but it was not properly on the testimony of the Ninevites that these sinners would be condemned. The plain meaning is, that the remembrance of their case would be considered as illustrating the guilt of those that rejected Christ; so that here those are said to condemn others who furnish out matter for their condemnation.

SECT. LXIII.

Mat. XII. 41.

and, behold, one much *greater than Jonah is here*, and you reject him, though he has been so long among you, and has performed a great variety of most surprising miracles before you.

and behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here. [LUKE XI. 32.]

42 And much more may it be concluded, that *the queen of* Sheba, in *the south country, shall rise up in judgment with this generation, and*, by the signal instance that she gave of her great desire to improve in knowledge, *shall* plead against the obstinacy and perverseness of this wicked age, and *condemn it; since*, great as her rank and her affairs in life were, *she came from the extreme boundaries of the earth*, even from the remotest parts of the Arabian coast, *to hear the wisdom of Solomon*, that she might improve by his learned conversation, (see 1 Kings x. 1, & *seq*;) *and, behold*, however contemptible he may appear in your eyes, *one* much *greater than Solomon*, both in dignity and wisdom *is here* before you, and is daily conversant among you.[h]

42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold a greater than Solomon *is* here. [LUKE XI. 31.]

43 Take heed therefore how you behave to me, lest all your inquiries after the kingdom of heaven, and all your converse with me, serve only to aggravate your guilt and ruin. For, if speedy repentance does not prevent it, I foresee that (to borrow a simile from the late subject of our discourse,) your case will be like that of a demoniac, who, after a little respite, falls into a more violent relapse: for as it sometimes happens that *an unclean spirit, when he has gone out of a man, goes about*, in a roaming discontented manner, *through dry* deserts and wild uncultivated *places*,[i] *seeking* some *rest* to his

43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest,

[h] *One greater than Solomon is here.*] Our Lord speaks of himself in such sublime language with the utmost reason, and with perfect modesty and decorum. The humble form of his appearance, and his necessary reserve in declaring himself the Messiah in so many words, made it yet more expedient that by such phrases as these he should sometimes intimate it: and indeed his saying he was greater than Solomon, that most illustrious of all the royal descendants of David, was as plain an intimation as could well be given.—Here is another undoubted instance, in which Luke has plainly inverted the order of our Lord's words; for the connection cannot be secured without transposing the verses as they stand in him. The attentive reader will observe many more instances of the same kind, and see from hence how little ground there is for what some have supposed, that Luke's account is so exact, that all the gospels should be regulated by his order. See note s on Luke i. 3, p. 22.

[i] *Through dry* deserts and wild uncultivated *places.*] Here is a plain reference to the common notion that evil demons had their haunts in deserts and desolate places. (Compare Isa. xiii. 21, and Rev. xviii. 2.) Some may think that a desire of doing mischief might rather have prompted the evil spirit, of whom our Lord speaks, to have continued in some city, or other place of public resort:

and findeth none: [Luke XI. 24—]

44 Then he saith, I will return into my house, from whence I came out: and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. [Luke XI.—24, 25.]

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits, more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.—[Luke XI. 26.]

own malignant nature; *and*, through the invisible restraint of Divine providence, he *findeth none: Then he saith, I will return to my dwelling, from whence I came out*; and resolves to make another attack on the person he had lately quitted: *and* it may be, *when he comes* to him, *he finds*, as *it* were, an habitation *empty* of any better guest, and even *swept and adorned* to receive him,[k] that is, he finds the miserable sinner unaffected with his late affliction and deliverance, and still a slave to those vices which render him an agreeable dwelling for Satan: And *then*, by the just judgment of God on such an incorrigible wretch, *he goes, and associates with himself seven other spirits* which are yet *more wicked* and mischievous *than himself, and, entering in, they dwell* together *there; so that the last condition of that man is* much *worse than the former. Thus also will it be to this wicked generation*;[l] instead of growing better they would grow seven times worse than be-

SECT. LXIII.

Mat. XII. 44.

45

but as he may be supposed in this parable to apprehend that, after being driven out, he should for a while be under some extraordinary restraint, it seems to me a very natural and beautiful circumstance thus to represent this malignant being as impatient of the sight of mankind, and rather chusing to seek his rest in the prospect of a sandy desert, than in the view of any more agreeable scene which might renew his anguish, by presenting to him the memorials of divine goodness to the human race.—Another explication has been given to this passage, and Dr. Whitby and some others interpret it of the devils being cast out of Judea, yet finding no rest in the deserts of heathenism, because there also the apostles cast them out, which drove them to return again to the Jews, and to make them worse than before: but though it is possible that our Lord's comprehensive mind might have some view to this, his hearers could not understand it thus; and perhaps, after all, the circumstances might be merely parabolical and ornamental.

[k] *Empty, swept, and adorned* to receive him.] Mr Jurieu draws a strange argument from hence in favour of purity, (one would think he meant of cleanliness,) that finding his former habitation swept and adorned, the demon could not enter in without a confederacy of seven yet more potent than he. But this is quite wide from the meaning of our Lord, who hereby strongly suggests that indulging sinful habits is like sweeping and furnishing the house, to invite the abode of Satan there; in the same manner as purity, devotion and love, are elsewhere represented as consecrating the soul for a temple to the Holy Ghost. (See 1 Cor. iii. 16. 17. vi. 19, 20; Eph. ii. 21, 22; and 1 Pet. ii. 1—5.)—I know some judicious writers have glossed more minutely on these words, as if the meaning were, "empty of true grace, swept "from gross sin, and garnished or adorned "with seeming virtues, and self-righteousness." But, with all due submission, especially to one very great name by which this interpretation is patronized, I think that in this connection it enervates, rather than illustrates the sense and spirit of this fine passage. Nor should I be forward to say that a reformation of life, without a thorough change of heart, though utterly unavailing as to his future state, brings a man more under the power of Satan than he was before, or makes him worthy of the punishment of being given over to seven demons instead of one.

[l] *Thus also will it be to this wicked generation.*] They who have read the sad account Josephus gives of the temper and

SECT. LXIII.

fore, as both the natural and the judicial consequence of their rejecting the methods of Divine grace for their recovery; till, as if they were possessed by a multitude of devils, they are madly hurried on to their irrecoverable ruin in this world and the next.

Mat. XII. 45.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. XII. 43—45.

LET us, to whom the revelation of the *gospel* is so clearly made, *fear* lest these dreadful things should come upon us, and the abuse of our advantages should render us an easy prey to *Satan*, and a fit habitation for the *powers of darkness*. Let those particularly fear it, who, having been brought to some serious impressions and some external reformation, are tempted to a *relapse* into former vices, which would render their *latter end* far *worse than their beginning*; (2 Pet. ii. 20.) *God* has permitted some such *awful instances* to occur; and unhappy wretches, perhaps some of them *the children of religious parents* too, who were once *not far from the kingdom of God*, have so abandoned every principle of religion, and every sentiment of wisdom and virtue, that it seems as if *seven devils* had possessed them, and were driving them headlong to destruction.

38 May we, instead of *demanding farther evidences of Christianity*, than the wisdom of God has seen fit to give us, make it our care to *hear* and *obey*, and diligently improve the light we have received! May we be brought to a sincere and lasting *repen-*
41 *tance* by the *preaching of Christ* and *his apostles*, lest the *Nine-vites rise up in judgment against us, and condemn us!* May we
42 own the superior *wisdom* of this *Divine Teacher*, this better *Solomon*; and say, as the *Queen of Sheba* to the *Jewish prince*, (1 Kings x. 8.) *Happy are these thy servants, who stand continually before thee, and hear thy wisdom!* for *thou speakest as never man spake* (John vii. 46;) and *in thee all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid.* (Col. ii. 3.) But oh, how many are *curious to know* what little concerns them, and are fond of improving their own *wit*, and trying that of others, by *hard questions*, while the far more obvious and important points of wisdom are neglected as beneath their regard; as if every thing were more necessary than being *wise to salvation!* We need not travel to *distant climates* to learn this heavenly philosophy; no, it is *nigh us, even in our mouth*; and we are, on that ac-

conduct of the Jews after the ascension of Christ, and just before their final destruction by the Romans, must acknowledge that no emblem could have been more proper to describe them. Their characters were the vilest that can be conceived, and they pressed on to their own ruin as if they had been possessed by legions of devils, and wrought up to the last degrees of madness.

count so much the more inexcusable, if it be not also in *our heart.* (Rom. x. 8.)

SECT. LXIV.

Our Lord declares his resolution of persisting in his work, urges the admission of the light he was dispersing, and declares his obedient disciples dearer to him than the nearest relations could otherwise be. Luke XI. 33—36. VIII. 19—21. Mat. XII. 46, *to the end:* Mark. III. 31, *to the end.*

LUKE XI. 33.

SECT. LXIV. Luke XI. 33.

Luke XI. 33. NO man when he hath lighted a candle, putteth *it* in a secret place, neither under a bushel; but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

OUR blessed Lord, in the conclusion of this excellent discourse,[a] which was occasioned by the perverseness of the Pharisees, who had been impiously reflecting on his miracles, and asking for a farther sign, assured them that he was not thus to be diverted from his work, but, notwithstanding all their opposition to it, yet would he still go on to bear his testimony to the truth; and to engage them to a free admission and improvement of the light which was then shining round them, he addressed the following exhortation to them: You have indeed endeavoured to oppose me with the greatest obstinacy and perverseness, nevertheless you shall not silence me; for *no man having lighted a lamp, puts it in a bye place, or under a bushel,* to conceal its rays, *but* rather sets it *on a stand, that they who come in* to the house *may see the lustre* that it gives: and thus, according to the charge that I gave formerly to my disciples. (Mat. v. 16, § xxxvii.) I too will take all opportunities of publishing the important message that I bring, and making my light to shine before men; and do you see that what I offer to you be received as it ought, and guard against those prejudices which would lead you to exclude it. For *the eye is,* as it were, *the lamp of the* whole *body:*[b] *if thine eye therefore be*

34 The light of the body is the eye:

[a] In the conclusion of this excellent discourse.] Luke has inserted here the following passages, which are delivered in words parallel to Mat. v. 15, and vi. 22, 23. (See the paraphrase and notes there, p. 213, 237.) Yet they appear in this connection to have a different sense, which I have expressed at large.

[b] *The eye is the lamp of the* whole *body.*] Nothing is more common with the finest ancient writers, than by an obvious figure, to call *the eyes, the lights of* the body, as our Lord here has done.—I render λυχνος *lamp*, because it had been so translated in the verse before, and it did not seem necessary to change it.

SECT. CXIV. Luke XI. 34.

clear,[c] and free from any vicious humour that would obstruct the sight, *thy whole body also will be enlightened; but if* [*thine eye*] *be distempered, thy* whole *body also will be* proportionably *darkened*, and no other part can supply the defect: and so it is with respect to the judgment, which is to the mind what the eye is to the body. *See to it, therefore, lest that which is* as *the light in thee, be* itself *darkness*; which it will be, if those perverse maxims be adhered to on which you now go, in rejecting my miracles, and the doctrine confirmed by them. (Compare Mat. vi. 22, 23, sect. xli.)

therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light: but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.

35 Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee, be not darkness.

36 It may indeed cost you some pains to reform your judgment, but the pleasure and advantage will be an abundant equivalent for all the labour that you take in doing it. *For* though the case that I but just now mentioned is so sad, yet, on the other hand, *if thy whole body*,[d] in consequence of a clear eye, and thy whole mind, by means of a rectified judgment, *be enlightened, having no part* remaining *dark* through distemper or prejudice, *(being* [*thus*] *all enlightened,*[e]*)* the benefit of it will be such, that *it will be as when a lamp lights thee by its sprightly lustre*,[f] and thou goest on with secu-

36 If thy whole body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

[c] *If thine eye therefore be clear.*] See note [b] on Mat. vi. 22, p. 237.

[d] *For if the whole body; ει γε το σωμα ον ολον.*] This is an unusual rendering of the particle γε, but it appeared to me necessary; for this verse is not introduced as an immediate consequence from the foregoing, but both of them are collateral inferences from ver. 34, as the intelligent reader will easily observe. And if it be admitted that γαρ, *for*, as well as ουν, *therefore*, is sometimes used with such a latitude, as that the former may be understood to introduce a *reason for*, and the latter to introduce a *consequence from*, something not immediately preceding; as also that they are sometimes used promiscuously; it will, I think, clear the connection in some places, where it will otherwise give us a great deal of perplexity, and, I fear, after all our fine spun reasonings, but very little satisfaction. (See Luke xx. 37, 38; Rom. i. 16, & seq. and Heb. ii. 9, & seq. Greek; and many other places.) Compare note [f] on Mat. xii. 8, p. 283.

[e] *Being thus all enlightened.*] By allowing these words, φωτεινον ολον, to be thus included in a parenthesis, we prevent the absurdity of supposing, as our translation would lead one to imagine, that our Lord says, *If thy whole body be full of light,—the whole shall be full of light.* Else the clause should be so rendered, as to shew, that the following words make a part of what our Lord asserts of the enlightened body: *it shall be all as full of light as when a lamp, &c.*

[f] *By its sprightly lustre.*] This seems to be the force of the word αστραπη which signifies a very strong and vivid flame, and is indeed most commonly applied to that of lightning, being here only used in the New Testament for any other flame. (See Mat. xxiv. 27; xxviii. 3; Luke x. 18; xvii. 24; and Rev. iv. 5; viii. 5; xi. 19; xvi. 18.)—It may perhaps be an oblique hint of the celestial original and vigorous active influence of that lustre which Christ diffused to illuminate and guide the mind.

rity and pleasure in those paths which would otherwise be full of uncertainty and danger. SECT. LXIV.

Mat. XII. 46. While he yet talked to the people, behold, [there came then] [Luke, unto him] his mother and his brethren, [and standing without, *they* sent unto him, calling him, *and*] desiring to speak with him. [Mark III. 31. Luke VIII. 19.—]

Mark III. 32— And the multitude sat about him, [and they could not come at him for the press.] [Luke VIII. —19.]

And as he was yet speaking these lively and important things *to the people*,[g] who in vast multitudes were gathered about him, *behold, there came unto him*, just *then, his mother, and his brethren*, or near kinsmen: *who standing without*, and apprehending the danger to which he exposed himself by such free remonstrances and admonitions as these, *sent to him, to call him* away from so dangerous a situation; [*and*] for this end, *desired* earnestly *to speak with him*, as about some affairs of importance. *And*, as *the multitude sat* round *about him*, there was no room for his relations to get near him; and, notwithstanding all that they could urge of a peculiar interest in him, the people were so eager in attending to him; that none of them were willing to give place, *and they could not come at him on account of the crowd. Therefore one* of the people *said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without* at some distance, *inquiring for thee*, [*and*] earnestly *desiring to see* [*and*] *speak with thee:* what therefore must be done? Wilt thou go out to them, or give orders to the people to make way for them to come hither to thee? *But he*, to encourage those that were truly serious in their attendance on his preaching, *answered and said to him that told him, Who* do you think *is my mother? And who are* those whom you imagine I consider as *my brethren?*[h] *And looking round on them that were sitting about him* to hear his word, *and stretching out his hand* with an affectionate regard, especially to-

Mat. XII. 46.

Mark III. 32.

Mat. XII. 47.

48

49

Mat. XII. 47. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren [without seek for thee, *and*] stand desiring [Luke, to see, *and*] to speak with thee.—[Mark III. —32. Luke VIII. 20.]

48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? Mark III. 33.]

49 And he [looked round about on them which sat about him, *and*] stretched forth his hand towards his

[g] *And as he was yet speaking*, &c.] Matthew is so express in connecting this story with the preceding discourses, (not to insist on Mark's following the same order too,) that it is absolutely necessary to transpose Luke viii. 19, *& seq.* unless we suppose that it happened *twice*, and that perhaps on the same day; for Matthew assures us, that *the parable of the sower* (to which Luke also joins it,) was delivered *this day*, Mat. xiii. 1—3.

[h] *Who is my mother?* &c.] To suppose that our Lord here intends to put any slight on his mother, would be very absurd: he only took the opportunity of expressing his affection to his obedient disciples in a peculiarly endearing manner; which could not but be a great comfort to them, and would be to Susannah, Joanna, Mary Magdalene, and the other pious women who sat near him, (Luke viii. 2, 3. p. 334, 335.) a rich equivalent for all the fatigue and expence which their zeal for their heavenly Master occasioned. And as this seems to have been towards the beginning of their progress, it is observable, that our Lord appears to have been peculiarly concerned for their encouragement. See Luke xi. 27, 28. p. 324.

SECT. LXIV.

Mat. XII. 50.

wards those that were *his* constant followers and professed *disciples*, *he said*, What kindred or relations have I that are nearer to me, or more esteemed than these! *Behold my mother and my brethren* here. *For these that hear the word of God and practise it, are* considered and acknowledged by me as *my mother and my brethren:* nor do I thus regard these only that are now before me, but I declare the same too of all others of their character; [*for*] *whosoever shall do the will of God, my heavenly Father*, even *this very person*, of whatever place and family and station he be, *is* regarded by me as *my brother, or my sister, or mother:*[1] for this pious disposition will render such dearer to me, than any of the bands of natural relation, if separate from real holiness, could possibly do.

disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren. [MARK III. 34.]

50 [For LUKE, my mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it; *and*] whosoever shall do the will of [God] my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother and [my] sister, and mother. [MARK III. 35. LUKE VIII. 21.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. XII. 46—50.

So may it be our care to *do the will of God*, that we may be thus *dear to our Redeemer*, who ought by so many tender bonds to be *dear to us*; and who, by such gracious and indulgent declarations as these which we have now been reading, is *drawing us* as with *the cords of a man*, and with *the bands of love!*

Luke XI. 33.

Still does *the light* of his Divine instructions shine with the brightest *lustre*, and diffuse itself around us! Let us open the *eyes* of our mind with *singleness* and *simplicity* to receive it; and make it our care to act according to it. *Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord*, (Hos. vi. 3.) and thus with cheerfulness shall we reap the fruit of a *well informed mind* and a *well regulated life!*

May we be delivered from all those *false maxims* which would *darken our hearts* amidst all this *meridian lustre*, and turn our boasted *light* into *darkness!* Would to God there were not renewed instances of this kind continually occurring among us; and that we did not daily meet with persons, whose *pretended wisdom* teaches them to forget or despise *the gospel*, and so serves only to *amuse their eyes*, while it *leads their feet to the chambers of death!*

[1] *This very person is my brother, or my sister, or mother.*] This possibly might be intended as an awful intimation to some of his near relatives, to take heed how they indulged that unbelief which so long after prevailed in their minds: (Compare John vii. 3—5, sect. xcviii.) For in this case the nearness of their relation unto Christ according to the flesh would be no manner of advantage to them; but those that should be found to do his will would be preferred in his esteem before them, and be considered as united to him in a relation that should never be dissolved. —This is one of those many places in which καὶ *(and.)* is put for ἢ *for;)* for to be sure our Lord could not speak of the same person as his brother, and sister, and mother. See note [c] on Mat. xii. 37, p. 344.

SECT. LXV.

Christ teaching by the sea-side, delivers the parable of the sower, and assigns the reason of his speaking to the multitude in parables. Mat. XIII. 1—17. Mark IV. 1—12. Luke VIII. 4—10.

MAT. XIII. 1.

THE same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea-side, [and began again to teach.] [MARK IV. 1—.]

2 And great multitudes [LUKE, much people] were gathered together, [LUKE, and were come to him out of every city,] so that he went into a ship, and sat [in the sea,] and the whole multitude stood [by the sea] on the shore. [MARK IV.—1.—LUKE VIII. 4.—]

MAT. XIII. 1.

SECT. LXV.

Mat. XIII. 1.

ON that day[a] *Jesus going out of the house*, into which, at the importunity of his friends, he had retired for a while, *sat down by the side of the sea* of Galilee, *and began again to teach* there. *And such great multitudes* of people *were* 2 again *gathered together* about him, *and came* in crowds *from* almost *every city* round about *to* hear *him*, that they began to press upon him, as they had done before in the former part of the day, (see Luke viii. 19, p. 344.) so *that, entering into a ship* for the conveniency of being better heard, and less incommoded by them, *he sat down* on the vessel *in the sea*, at a little distance from the shore; *and the whole multitude stood by the sea upon the shore*, shewing the utmost eagerness to hear whatever he should say.

MARK IV. 2. And he [LUKE, spake by

Mark IV. 2.

And, to make his instructions the more agreeable to them, and the more deeply to impress them on the minds of honest and attentive hearers, *he spake* to them *by a parable*[b] concerning

[a] *On that day.*] Matthew is the only evangelist who expressly fixes these parables to the day on which the preceding occurrences happened; I say, fixes them to it; for though the phrases, *εν μια των ημερων, on a certain day;* and *εν εκειναις ημεραις, in those days*, be very ambiguous in their signification, (see Mat. iii. 1, and note [e], p. 96.) I cannot apprehend any thing more determinate than this of *εν τη ημερα εκεινη, on that day.* The way in which Luke introduces this discourse, as if it was delivered at the beginning of the progress Jesus made, before the passages that we have mentioned in the preceding sections, (sect. lxi. *&c. seq.*), is not enough to fix the time when this discourse was made: and we have already shewn, in several instances, that it is no unusual thing with Luke to neglect the order of time, and sometimes only to relate a fact as happening on a certain day. (See Luke v. 17, and note [a], p. 256, and compare Luke viii. 22; vi. 6, 12; xi. 14; and xx. 1.) Matthew might know the fact we have now before us more circumstantially than Luke, though the latter's account be exactly true so far as it goes; a reflection which we have frequent occasion to make with respect to all the evangelists.

[b] *A parable.*] The word, according to its Greek etymology, properly signifies *a comparison* or *simile:* in which sense it is used here and in most other places; though sometimes it appears to be particularly used for an instructive apologue or fable. (Compare Ezek. xvii. 2, *&c. seq.*) And, as these often were expressed in poetical language, (see Judg. ix. 7—15), the word *parable* sometimes signifies *a sublime discourse*, elevated beyond the common forms of speech, though no simile be used. [Numb. xxiii. 7; xxiv. 15; Job xxvii. 1; xxix. 1; and Psal. lxxviii. 2.) And, as short parables after

SECT. LXV.

Mark IV. 2.

a sower, which shall be now related; [*and*] *taught them* also *many* other *things in parables*; *and* beginning with that of the sower, *in* the course of *his teaching* this day, he *said unto them:*

3 *Hearken* with peculiar attention to what I am now going to say, that you may thus be taught to hear my other discourses with improvement, and may not, through negligence, inconstancy, or carnality of mind, lose the benefit of my repeated instructions.[c] *Behold*, at the spring of the year,[d] *a sower went forth to sow* the ground with *his seed.*

4 *And*, as the ground lay near a beaten path, *it happened* that, *while he was sowing*, *some* of the seed was scattered, and *fell by the way side; and*, lying there uncovered, *it was* either *trodden under foot* by passengers, *or* picked up by *the birds of the air*, who presently *came and devoured it.*

5 *And some* of it *fell on stony soil, upon a rock* that lay but just beneath the surface of the ground, *where it had not much earth* to cover it; *and immediately it sprang up*, and appeared green, *because it had no depth of earth* to make 6 its way through: *But* its verdure was very short lived; for *when the sun shone* hot upon it, *it was* presently *scorched* by the warmth of its beams; *and withered away*, almost *as soon as it was sprung up, because it had no* room for taking *root* in such a shallow bed of earth, [*and*] *wanted* sufficient *moisture* to nourish it.

7 *And some* more of the seed being thrown near the hedge, *fell among* the briars and *thorns* there; *and* when it began to shoot out of the ground, *the thorns sprung up with it*, and grew so much faster, as not to leave it either room

a parable, *and*] taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine; [MAT. XIII. 3.—LUKE VIII.—4.]

3 Hearken, behold, there went out a sower to sow [LUKE, his seed:] [MAT. XIII.—3. LUKE VIII. —5.]

4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, [LUKE, and it was trodden down,] and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. [MAT. XIII. 4. LUKE VIII.—5.]

5 And some fell on stony ground, [LUKE, upon a rock,] where it had not much earth, and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: [MAT. XIII. 5. LUKE VIII. 6.—]

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched, and [LUKE, as soon as it was sprung up,] because it had no root [LUKE, *and* lacked moisture,] it withered away. [MAT. XIII. 6. LUKE VIII.—6.]

7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns [LUKE, sprang up with it,] and choked it, and

grew into proverbs, or were alluded to in them, hence the word *parable* is sometimes used for a *proverb*. Mic. ii. 4, and Hab. ii. 6.

[c] The benefit of my repeated instructions.] As our Lord afterwards explains all the parts of *this parable*, I thought it sufficient to give this general account of it's design in as few words as possible. Dr. Clarke, by taking the contrary method in his paraphrase, (though in this he be followed by others), both renders the apostle's question as to the meaning of this parable very unnecessary, and occasions a needless and disagreeable repetition.

[d] At the spring of the year.] Many circumstances below make this probable, and indeed I do not find that in Judea they sowed even wheat sooner: but to conclude from hence, as Sir Isaac Newton does (in his Discourse on Prophecy, p. 153,) that this parable was delivered in the spring, is very precarious. One might as well argue from that of the tares, delivered the same day, that it was harvest.

it yielded no fruit. [MAT. XIII. 7.—LUKE VIII. 7.]

8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased, and brought forth some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred [fold.] [MAT. XIII. 8. LUKE VIII. 8.—]

LUKE VIII.—8. And when he had said these things, he cried, [MARK, and said unto them,] He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. (MAT. XIII. 9. MARK IV. 9.)

MARK IV. 10—And when he was alone, they [the disciples] that were about him with the twelve, [came and] asked of him the parable, [LUKE, saying, What might this parable be?] [*and* why speakest thou unto them in parables?] MAT. XIII. 10. LUKE VIII. 9.

MAT. XIII. 11. He answered, and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom

to grow or nourishment to support it; *and* so they *choked it, and it yielded no fruit.* SECT. LXV.

And the rest of the seed *fell on good ground, and yielded fruit, which,* being well rooted and nourished, *grew up and increased* to its full proportion; *and* the ears filled, and *produced* a rich and plentiful increase, *some* of them *thirty, and some sixty, and* even *some an hundred fold,* for one grain that had been sown.[e] Mark IV. 8.

And when he had said these things, he cried out with a louder voice than before, *and said unto them, He that hath ears to hear* these important truths, *let him hear* and regard them with the most diligent attention, and seriously reflect upon that instructive moral[f] which is contained in the parable I have now been delivering. Luke VIII. 8.

And when the assembly was broke up (after Christ had delivered many other similitudes of this kind to them, which will be mentioned afterwards,) *when he* had parted with the multitude, and *was alone* in a retired place, the rest of *his disciples,*[g] *with the twelve,* who had been with him while he spake these things, *came and asked him* [*concerning*] *the parable* of the sower, *saying,* We desire thou wouldest more particularly explain to us *what may* the meaning of the several circumstances of *this parable be? [and]* give us leave to ask thee, *Why dost thou* preach in such a manner to the multitude, and *speak to them in parables,* which probably so few of them can understand? Mark IV. 10.

And he replying, said unto them, I thus express myself in parables, *because,* though *it is granted,* through the Divine goodness, *to you,* whose hearts are open to receive the truth in the love of it, *to know* and understand *the mys-* Mat. XIII. 11.

[e] *An hundred fold* &c.] Such an increase even in those fruitful countries, was not very common, but however sometimes happened. See Gen. xxvi. 12.

[f] Reflect upon that instructive moral.) This solemn proclamation was sufficient to declare that they also were to regard the following similies as intended to convey some useful instructions, and not as mere matter of amusement.

[g] *His disciples.*] This is a very just translation of the phrase οι περι αυτον, which frequently is used in the best authors, for the disciples, or followers, of the person it refers to: and as it thus agrees with Matthew, so we may fitly understand it, of those who attended Christ in his progress with the twelve apostles. And in this way the style appears more natural and easy, than if we read it as it stands in our translation, where it sounds somewhat harsh, to speak of *those that were about him, when he was alone.*

SECT. LXV.

teries of the kingdom of heaven, which have been long concealed; *yet it is not granted to others*, who are prejudiced against them, *but* they are justly suffered to continue unacquainted with them: and therefore *to them that are without*, and who are strangers, through their own neglect and folly, to what they might before have learned, *all* [*these*] *things are* now involved *in parables* and figures;[h] which, though they affect the mind of the attentive hearer, and promote his edification, are disregarded by the rest, and only looked upon as an empty amusement. *For to every one who hath* any talent committed to him, and shews that he hath it by his diligent improvement of it, yet more *shall be given, and he shall have* a still greater *abundance* of means for his further improvement; *but even that which he* already *hath, shall be taken away from* the slothful creature, and be withdrawn from *him* who acts like one *who hath not* any thing to improve. (Compare Luke viii. 18.) Thus wise men deal with their servants; and thus God will generally act in dispensing opportunities of a religious nature. And *therefore*, on this very principle do *I* now *speak to them in parables*, whereas I have formerly used the plainest manner of discourse: *because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not,*[i] *neither do they understand;* inasmuch as they do not honestly use the faculties that God has given them, but are like persons that have their eyes and ears, and yet will neither see nor hear. So that it is in just displeasure that I preach to them in this obscure language, that what has been their crime may be their punishment;[k] *that seeing* my miracles, *they may see*

of heaven, but to them it is not given: [LUKE, but to others] [to them that are without, all *these* things are done] in parables. [MARK IV. 11. LUKE VIII. 10.—]

12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, even that he hath.

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand.

MARK IV. 12.— That seeing they

Mat. XIII. 11.

12

13

Mark IV. 12.

[h] *All* these *things are* now involved *in parables* and figures.] Here γινεται is plainly put for εστι: I therefore render it *all things are in parables*. See Mat. vi. 16; x. 16; Mark i. 4; Luke ii. 13; xxiv. 19; John i. 6; and elsewhere.

[i] *Seeing, they see not, and hearing they hear not.*] This is justly and elegantly paraphrased in the version of 1727, in a few words; *they overlook what they see, and are inattentive to what they hear.* Yet I cannot think the Hebraism without some peculiar emphasis. Our translators have well expressed the force of it, Gen. ii. 17; Jer. iv. 10; and Zech. vi. 15.

[k] It is in just displeasure, &c.] A late learned writer has endeavoured to prove, that *Christ's use of parables* was not *in displeasure*, but in tender *condescension* to their aversion to truths delivered in a less pleasing manner: but this is in effect supposing both Mark, (chap. iv. 12.) and Luke (chap. viii. 10.) to have reported what our Lord says in a sense directly contrary to what he intended; for they say in so many words, it was *that* the multitude *might not perceive, nor understand*; and it also makes Mat. xiii. 12, both foreign and opposite to the purpose for which it was spoken. We must there-

may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand: lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them. [Luke VIII.—10.]

Mat. XIII. 14. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should

the outward act, *but not perceive* the evidence arising from them: *and hearing* my discourses, *they may* indeed *hear* the sound of them, *but not understand* their true intent and meaning; *lest at any time they should be converted, and* [*their*] *sins should be forgiven them*, which to many of these people they never shall. SECT. LXV. Mark IV. 12.

And thus *in them is the prophecy of Isaiah* most exactly *fulfilled*, (Isa. vi. 9, 10.) *which* indeed was originally intended to include them, and *saith*, "*By hearing you shall hear*, (or you "may still go on to hear with eagerness,) *but* "*you shall not understand; and seeing you* "*shall see*, or you may still go on to see, *but* "*you shall not perceive.*[l] *For*, like a wretch "who has besotted and stupified himself with "riot, *the heart* or intellectual faculty *of this people is*, as it were, *grown stiff with fatness*,[m] *and they hear with heavy ears, and* "*draw up their eyes* as if they were more than "half asleep; so that one would imagine they "were afraid *lest at any time they should* happen to be roused, so as to *see with their* Mat. XIII. 14. 15

fore submit to the difficulties which attend this natural interpretation; which are much lessened by considering that this happened after Christ had upbraided and threatened the neighbouring places, (from whence, doubtless, the greatest part of the multitude came,) which was some time *before this sermon:* (see Mat. xi. 20—24, sect. lviii.) And it is not improbable, that the scribes and Pharisees, who had so vilely *blasphemed* him *this very morning*, (Mat. xii. 24, p. 335.) might with an ill purpose have gathered a company of their associates and creatures about Christ to *insnare him;* which if it were the case, will fully account for such a *reserve*.—It signifies little to plead, on the other side, that *these parables* are *plain*. Their being so to us, is no proof they were so *to these hearers;* and since the apostles themselves *did not understand* even *that of the sower*, it is no wonder if the rest were *unintelligible* to the *careless* and *captious hearer*.—Consistent with all this is what was said of the advantages attending this method, to those who were honest and attentive; in the paraphrase on Mark iv. 2, p. 355.

another considerable argument for the interpretation here given of the whole context.—A pious and learned friend, by whose kind animadversions I have been led to insert some additional notes in this work, has urged several arguments to prove, that this clause should be rendered *seeing, &c. you* WILL *not perceive*. But on the maturest review of this passage, both in Isaiah and the several places where it occurs in the New Testament, I cannot apprehend that it was spoken merely by way of complaint, but think it plain that it was intended also as a prediction; (compare Mark iv. 12; Luke viii. 10; John xii. 40; Acts xxviii. 26, 27; Rom. xi. 8.) Now in predictions, we generally render the future form, "Such or such a thing SHALL "happen," though we only mean to express the certainty of the event, without denying the freedom of the moral agents concerned in it, or detracting from it in any degree.

[l] *Seeing you shall see, but you shall not perceive.*] This is a just translation of the original, both here and in Isaiah; and is

[m] *Grown stiff with fatness.*] This is the proper English of παχυνθη, and alludes to a notion the ancients had, that a great quantity of *fat* about the *heart stupified* both the intellectual and sensitive powers. Compare Deut. xxxi. 20; xxxii. 15; Psal. cxix. 70; and Isa. vi. 10.

SECT. LXV. Mat. XIII. 15.

" *eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand* " *with their hearts, and should be converted,* " *and I should heal* and save *them.* I there- " fore justly leave them to their own obstinacy, " and direct thee, O Isaiah, to methods which " I know will increase it.

see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 *But happy* indeed *are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear:* you have not only greater opportunities of instruction than others, but greater integrity and seriousness in attending to them: and I congra-

16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.

17 tulate you on so happy an occasion. *For verily I say unto you, That many* of the most holy *prophets, and* most singularly *righteous men,* under the Jewish dispensation, *have* earnestly *desired to see the things which you see, and did not see them, and to hear the things which you hear, and did not hear them:* but only had imperfect intimations of those mysteries, which are now revealed with much greater clearness to you, and will, through the divine blessing, render you singularly useful in this world, and proportionably happy in the next. (Compare Luke x. 23. 24, § cvi.)

17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen *them*; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them.*

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. XII. 12.

LET us hear with fear and trembling, these awful declarations from the lips of the compassionate Jesus himself. Here were crowds about Christ, who indulged such prejudices, and attended with such perverse dispositions, that in righteous judgment he

13 took an *obscurer method of preaching* to them, and finally left many of them, under darkness and impenitency, to *die in their sins.*

15 Let us take heed, lest the bounties of divine providence should be thus abused by us, as a means of casting us into a *stupid insensibility* of the hand and voice of the *blessed God:* or we may otherwise have ground to fear, lest he should leave us to our own *delusions,* and *give us up to the lusts of our own hearts.* And then the privilege of *ordinances,* and of the most awakening *providential dispensations,* will be *vain; seeing we shall see, and not perceive; and hearing we shall hear, and not understand.*

It is our peculiar *happiness* under the *gospel,* that *we see* and *hear,* what *prophets* and *princes,* and *saints of old, desired to see* and *hear,* but were not favoured with it. Let us be thankful for our privilege, and improve it well; lest a *neglected gospel* by the righteous judgment of God be *taken away,* and our *abused seasons of grace,* by one method of divine displeasure or other, be

brought to a speedy *period*. But if by grace *it is given to us to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*, let us learn a thankfulness in some measure proportionable to the corrupt *prejudices* which have been overborne, and the important *blessings* which are secured to us. SECT. LXV.

SECT. LXVI.

Our Lord explains the parable of the sower, and exhorts his disciples to a diligent improvement of their knowledge and gifts.
Mark IV. 13—25. Mat. XIII. 18—23. Luke VIII. 11.—18.

MARK IV. 13.

AND he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

MARK IV. 13.

AND when the twelve apostles, in a retired place (as we observed above, Mark iv. 10. p. 357.) asked Jesus the meaning of the parable of the sower, which he had delivered to the multitude as he sat in the ship; *he said unto them, Know ye not* the meaning of *this* easy and familiar *parable*, so nearly referring to the prophetic language? (see Jer. iv. 3. and Hos. x. 12.) *How then will you understand all* the other *parables* that I have spoken, some of which are much harder than this? SECT. LXVI. Mark IV. 13.

MAT. XIII. 18. Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

I shall however yield to your request, and shew myself on all occasions ready to instruct you: *hear ye therefore*, according to your desire, the explication of *the parable of the sower*. Mat. XIII. 18.

LUKE VIII. 11. Now the parable is this: The seed [*which* the sower soweth] is the word of God (MARK IV. 14.)

Now the meaning of *the parable is this*. It is intended to represent the different success of the gospel in the world; for *the seed* [*which*] *the sower* I spoke of *soweth is the word of God*, which I am employed to preach, and which will ere long also be committed to you: but too much of our labour will be lost on three bad kinds of hearers, whom I described in the parable by different kinds of unfruitful ground. Luke VIII. 11.

MARK IV. 15. And these are they by the way side; where the word is sown, but [when any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then] Satan [the

And, in the first place, *these are they* whom I described as receiving the seed *by the way-side, where the word is* no sooner *sown, but* the effect of it is presently lost, and their true character may thus be represented to you: *when any one hears the word of the* heavenly *kingdom*, or of the gospel of the grace of God, *and* through a careless inattention *understands* [*it*] *not*; *then Satan, that wicked one*, who is Mark IV. 15.

SECT. LXVI.

Mark IV. 15.

the great enemy of God and souls, flying as eagerly as a bird to his prey, *comes immediately, and catches away the word that was sown in his heart, lest they* who have heard it *should believe and be saved;* and as nothing is like to be long remembered which is not well understood, all trace of it is quickly lost out of such a mind, as grain scattered in the road: *this,* I say, *is he that received the seed by the way-side* in the parable.

wicked one] cometh immediately, and taketh away the word [which was sown in his heart, [LUKE, lest they should believe, and be saved:] this is he which received seed by the way-side. [MAT. XIII. 19. LUKE VIII. 12.]

16 *And in like manner,* in the next place, *these are they who* were described as having *received the seed in stony soil,* or *on a rock* under a very shallow bed of earth: such, I mean, *who having heard* the message of pardon, life and glory, which *the word* of the gospel brings, *immediately receive it with* a transport of *joy,* and feel their natural passions elevated and enlarged at

16 And these are they likewise which [received the seed] on stony ground, [LUKE, on the rock;] who when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; [MAT. XIII. 20. LUKE VIII. 13—.]

17 the report of such agreeable news; *But* as they *have no root* of deep conviction and real love to holiness *in themselves,* they have no true impression of the power of it on their hearts, *and so believe* it only in a notional, not a vital manner, [*and*] *endure* in the profession of it *but for a* little *while;* [*and*] *afterwards in a time of* sharp *trial,* especially *when* any domestic *oppression or* public *persecution arises on account of the word, they are presently offended,* [*and*] *apostatise* from that warm and eager profession which in times of less difficulty they were so forward to make.

17 And have no root in themselves, and so [LUKE, believe, *and*] endure but for a time; afterward [LUKE, in time of temptation] when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended, [LUKE, *and* fall away.] MAT. XIII. 21. LUKE VIII. —13.

18, 19 *And,* in the third place *these are they* whom I described by telling you, *that* they *received seed among thorns:* even *such as hear the word,* perhaps with great constancy, and the appearance of serious attention; [*but*] almost *as soon as they have heard* [*it,*] *go out* of the assembly, *and,* immerging themselves in secular affairs, permit *the cares of this world, and the* artful *delusion of riches,*[a] *or* perhaps *the pleasures of* [*this*] animal *life, or the desires of* some *other things* which equally tend to alienate the soul

18, 19. And these are they which [received seed] among thorns; such as hear the word, [LUKE, *and* when they have heard, go forth,] and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, [LUKE, and pleasures of *this* life,] and the lusts of other things,

[a] *The* artful *delusion of riches.*] This phrase, ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου, is very elegant, and admirably expresses the *various artifices,* by which people in the pursuit of *riches* excuse themselves from day to day, in putting off *religious cares,* and the confounding disappointment which often mingles itself with their labours, and even with their success. Compare Prov. xi. 28; Luke xviii. 24; 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10, 17; 2 Tim. ii. 4; and iv. 10.

entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful; [Luke, *yea*, they are choked, and bring no fruit to perfection.] [Mat. XIII. 22. Luke VIII. 14.]

from God, to *enter* [*into their minds*,] *and* take up all their thoughts and time to such a degree, as to *choke the word, and* so *it becomes unfruitful:* [*yea*,] *they* themselves *are choked*, as it were, with these fatal incumbrances,[b] *and* whatever purposes or faint efforts they may make towards a partial reformation, they *bring no fruit to perfection*, but remain destitute of every degree of genuine and prevailing piety. SECT. LXVI. Mark IV. 19.

20 And these are they which [received seed into] good ground; such as hear the word [and understand,] and receive, [Luke, *and* keep *it* in an honest and good heart,] and bring forth fruit [Luke, with patience,] some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred. [Mat. XIII. 23. Luke VIII. 15.]

And once more, *these are they, who* were said to have *received the seed into good ground:* even *such as* do not only *hear the word* with attention *and* simplicity of mind, but *understand* what is spoken, *and receive* it without prejudice and opposition; *and* when they depart, are solicitous to *retain* [*it*] *in an honest and good heart, bringing forth* the good *fruit* of substantial holiness, in various degrees, *with patience* and perseverance, *some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold*, both to their present joy, and to their future glory. 20

21 And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? *and* not to be set on a candlestick?

Luke VIII. 16. No man when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth *it* under a bed; but setteth it on a candle-

And he said farther *to them*, I appeal to yourselves, and urge it as a proper consideration to engage you to communicate the light you have to others, *Is a lamp brought* into a room, *to be put under a bushel, or under a bed?* [*and*] *not to be set on a stand?* You know it is not. For *no man* of common sense will even waste a few drops of oil so: nor is there any one that, *having lighted a lamp, covers it with a vessel, or puts it under a couch*;[c] *but sets it upon a stand* 21 Luke VIII. 16.

[b] *They* themselves *are choked*, &c.] So Luke expresses it, perhaps to intimate the uneasy situation of the mind, while clogged and straitened with such incumbrances as these, and rendered, as it were, unfit to breath its own native air, and to delight itself with celestial and eternal objects.—Choking arises from any thing which straitens the gullet, or wind-pipe, and so obstructs the passage of food or air. And thus young plants, or corn, may properly be said to be choked by thorns, which do not leave them room to grow; and the word, which would exert its vital power and principle, is represented as choked, when thus pressed with secular cares prevailing in the mind.

[c] *Covers it with a vessel, or puts it under a couch.*] Mark expresses it as a *question*, and Luke as a direct *negation*. I have given it in both the forms, as what seemed most effectually to secure the credit of both the evangelists: and I humbly submit it to better judgments, whether, in some of these instances, Christ might not immediately repeat the thought a second time in nearly the same words, in order to fix some very memorable passage on the minds of his hearers, who to be sure needed *line upon line, and precept upon precept*. In this view he will appear, if less like a polite orator, yet more like a father instructing his children; and perhaps if more of this familiar and condescending method was practised in our sermons, though the delicacy of a few might be less amused, the souls of the people might be more edified, and consequently the end of Christian ordinances, (which is by no means the applause of those who administer them,) might be more effectually answered.

SECT. LXVI.

in a conspicuous place, *that* all *they who enter in* to the house, *may see the light* of it, and guide their motions by it: (compare Mat. v. 15, p. 212, 213; and Luke xi. 33, p. 351.) And can you think it is fit, that you should waste the precious oil of my instructions, which I am pouring into your minds, to render you the 17 lamps of my sanctuary? Be not then backward, as occasion offers, to communicate to others what you receive from me; *for nothing is* now said in *secret* among us, *which shall not be revealed; nor* any thing *hid, which shall not be made known and published*;[d] as we are carrying on no works or counsels of darkness among us, but concerting measures for the public instruction and reformation of mankind.

Luke VIII. 16.

stick, that they which enter in may see the light.

17 For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad. [MARK IV. 22.]

Mark IV. 23.

If any man therefore *hath ears to hear, let him hear*; and if you have intelligent powers, let it be your peculiar care to exert them to this important purpose.

MARK IV. 23. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24 *And he said* also *to them*, Do you above all *take heed therefore*, and carefully attend to *what* you hear from me, [*and*] *how you hear* it: for in this sense I may say, as formerly on another occasion, (Mat. vii. 2. p. 242. and Luke vi. 38. p. 303.) *The measure with which you mete* to others, *shall be used to you; and to you that* attentively *hear, more shall be given*,[e] and those who are most diligent in teaching others shall 25 be taught most themselves. *For*, as I said before in this discourse, (Mat. xiii. 12. p. 358.) *to him that* improves what he *hath*, more *shall be given; but from him that* acts as one who *hath not*, from him *shall be taken away even that which* for the present *he hath*, [*or*] *seemeth to have*;[f] but which he shall soon find was not,

24 And he said unto them, take heed [therefore] what [*and* how] you hear: With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear, shall more be given. [LUKE VIII. 18.—]

25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath, [*or* seemeth to have.] LUKE VIII.—18.]

[d] *Nor any thing hid which shall not be made known and published.*] Though a prospect of the final discovery of the great day would contain a strong argument, both in compassion to others, and from a prudent regard to their own happiness, to engage his disciples to make a faithful report of the gospel committed to their trust; yet I think the words will contain an important sense, without supposing them to refer to that. Compare Mat. x. 26, 27. sect. lxxv. and Luke xii. 2, 3. sect. cxi. in which two places the same words seem, as often elsewhere, to have a different sense.

[e] *To you that hear, more shall be given.*] I know there may be some room to doubt, whether these three verses in Mark, at the close of this section, were spoken to the disciples apart, or to the multitude; but I think these words make the former much more probable.

[f] *Seemeth to have.*] I know δοκεῖ ἔχειν, *seemeth to have*, is sometimes a *pleonasm*, which signifies *to have*; yet the paraphrase shews it is not necessarily so here, which

accurately speaking, his own, and must be strictly accounted for to the real proprietor. SECT. LXVI.

IMPROVEMENT.

Let us apply to ourselves *this charge* of our *blessed Redeemer*, and *take heed how we hear*. Especially let us be very careful, that we *despise not him* that *now speaks to us from heaven*; and remember the *authority* which his *exaltation there* gives to the *words* which he spake in the *days of his flesh*. Luke viii. 18.

Let us attentively *hear* the *parable of the sower*, and its *interpretation*. Still is *Christ* by his *word* and *ministers*, *sowing* among us *the good seed*. Still is the great *enemy of souls* labouring to *snatch it away*. Let us endeavour to *understand*, that we may *retain* it; and to *retain*, that we may *practise* it. Still do *the cares of this world* press us; still do its *pleasures* solicit us; still do *our lusts war in our members*; and all unite their efforts to prevent our *fruitfulness in good works*: but let us remember, that with *having our fruit unto holiness, everlasting life* is connected as *the end*; and that *in due season we shall reap, if we faint not*. (Rom. vi. 22, and Gal. vi. 9.) Mat. xiii. 18. *& seq.* Ver. 19. Mark iv. 20. Ver. 19.

Let us therefore be concerned, that the *seed* may take *deep root* in our minds, that we may not rest in any superficial impression on the *passions*; but, feeling the energy of that *living principle*, may *flourish* under the circumstances which *wither* others, and may in due time be gathered as God's *wheat into his garner*. Nor let us repine if we now *go forth weeping, bearing* this *precious seed*, while we have such a hope of *coming again rejoicing, bringing our sheaves with us*. (Psal. cxxvi. 6.) 17

SECT. LXVII.

Our Lord delivers the parable of the tares in the field; and afterwards explains it at large to his disciples. Mat. XIII. 24—30. 36—43.

MAT. XIII. 24.

MAT. XIII. 24. ANOTHER parable put he forth unto

NOW to return to the story of our Lord's teaching the multitude from the ship: *he* likewise at the same time *proposed another parable to them*, to intimate that persons of various characters should come into the gospel profes- SECT. LXVII. Mat. XIII. 24.

is also favoured by Luke xvi. 12. sect. cxxiv. (see also 1 Cor. iii. 18; Gal. vi. 3; and Jam. i. 26.) However, as I confess it may possibly be a pleonasm, if any chuse to take it thus, then the last clause, which is included in a parenthesis, must be left out.

SECT. LXVII.

Mat. XIII. 24.

sion; but that there should be a final separation between them in the other world, however they might be blended together in this. And he taught them, *saying*, *The kingdom of heaven*,[a] or the success of the gospel dispensation, *may* 25 *be compared* to that which happened *to a man*[b] *who had sown good seed in his ground: But* one night, *while the men* who were set to watch it *slept*, an ill-natured neighbour, who was *his enemy*, with a malicious view to spoil the crop, *came and sowed* a quantity of *tares among the wheat* which had just been thrown into the 26 ground, *and went away* without being discovered. *But* afterwards, *when the blade was sprung up, and produced fruit, then the tares also ap-* 27 *peared*, among the ears of wheat, in a manner easily to be distinguished. *And the servants of the proprietor of the estate*[c] *came* in a surprise, *and said to him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed* of pure wheat *in thy field? whence then* 28 *hath it* these *tares* which now appear mingled with the crop? *And he said unto them, Some* ill-natured and *malicious person* in the neighbourhood *has* undoubtedly *done this*, taking advantage of your absence or negligence. *And the servants*, willing to make the best amends they could, *said to him, Wilt thou then have us* 29 *go* directly to root them out, *and gather them up*, before they get any further head? *But he said, No*, I do not think that proper; *lest while you* endeavour to *gather up the tares, you should*, 30 before you are aware, *root up* some of *the wheat also with them:* It will be better to *permit both to grow together till the harvest* come; *and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles, that they may* afterwards *be burnt* for fuel;[d] *but gather ye the wheat into my barn*, that it there may be ready for my use.

them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came, and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came, and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them:

30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn.

[a] *The kingdom of heaven.*] That this is frequently to be understood of the gospel dispensation, has been observed before in note [k] on Mat. iii. 2. p. 99.

[b] *May be compared* to that which happened *to a man.*] Or may be illustrated by the following similitude. See note [i] on Luke vii. 32, p. 322.

[c] *The proprietor of the estate.*] So οἰκοδεσπότης seems to signify in this connection. He is supposed to be *the master of the field*, and of some lodge, or farm-house, in which these servants dwelt.

[d] *May* afterwards *be burnt* for fuel.] This plainly proves, that the word ζιζάνια, which we render tares, does not exactly answer to that vegetable among us, which is a kind of pulse, too good to be used merely for fuel.

SECT. LXVII. Mat. XIII. 36.

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

Then Jesus, after he had spoke some other parables,[e] *having dismissed the multitude, went* from the vessel where he had been preaching *into an house*, to refresh himself a little before he crossed the lake;[f] *and his disciples*, who constantly attended him, *came to him, saying*, We desire thou wouldest *explain to us the parable of the tares in the field*, for we do not perfectly understand it.

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed, is the Son of man:

And he answered and said unto them, He, in the parable, *that sowed the good seed, is* intended to represent *the Son of man*, the great preacher of the gospel, which is ordained as the most illustrious instrument for the reformation and happiness of mankind.

38 The field is the world: the good seed are the children of the kingdom: but the tares are the children of the wicked one:

The field is indeed *the* whole *world*, in which the gospel is to be preached, and not to be confined to the Jewish nation alone: *the good seed are the children of the kingdom*, or those truly pious men who, being formed on the model of the gospel, and as it were assimilated to it, are the heirs of future glory, as well as entitled to the present privileges of my church: but, on the other hand, *the tares are* wicked men, who are indeed *the children of the wicked one*, though many of them may profess themselves my disciples, and for their own unworthy ends, pretend a great zeal for my cause and church.

39 The enemy that sowed them, is the devil: the harvest is the end of the world: and the reapers are the angels.

The enemy that sowed them is the devil, who studies by all means to corrupt mens principles, and debauch their lives, and puts those on a hypocritical profession of religion, who are utter strangers to its power. *The harvest* I mentioned, *is the end of the world*, the great day of judgment and retribution; *and the reapers are the angels*, who are to be employed in the services of that day.

40 As therefore the tares are gathered, and burnt in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world.

As therefore the tares in the parable *are* ordered by the owner of the field to be *gathered together, and burnt in the fire; so* likewise *shall it be at the end of this world.*

41 The Son of man shall send forth his

The Son of man shall then *send forth*

[e] After he had spoke some other parables.] Some of these are contained in the intermediate verses (ver. 31—35); but I apprehended the explication of the parable would appear with some peculiar advantage, thus immediately after it.

[f] A little before he crossed the lake.] I am sensible that Mark iv. 36, may seem some objection to this; but the reader may see in my paraphrase there, sect. lxix. that I apprehend it may be reconciled with this interpretation and order of the story; yet I acknowledge it possible, that the house here spoken of might be on the *other side of the lake*, and that they might go into it the *next day*.

SECT. LXVII.

Mat. XIII. 41.

his attendant *angels*,[g] *and they*, in obedience to his command, *shall gather out of his kingdom all things which have been an offence* to others, *even* all *those that practise iniquity*, and thereby bring a reproach on their profession, and lay stumbling blocks in the way of others:

angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42 *And* these blessed spirits, as the executioners of the Divine vengeance, *shall cast them into* hell, *the furnace of* unquenchable *fire*: and dreadful indeed will their condition be: for *there shall be lamentation, and gnashing of teeth* for ever,[h] in the height of anguish, rage, and despair; a despair, aggravated by all the privileges they once enjoyed, and the vain hope which, as my professed disciples, they once entertained.

42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 But *then shall the righteous* be publicly owned and honoured, and with a joyful welcome be received into the heavenly world, where they shall *shine forth* with divine radiance and glory, *like the sun* itself, and be fixed for ever *in the kingdom of their Father*, to enjoy the transforming visions of his face.

43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

This misery, or this felicity, is the end of all the living; nor can I ever declare a truth of greater importance to you. See to it therefore, that you regard it with becoming attention; and *every one who hath ears to hear, let him hear* it, and govern his life by its extensive influence.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 38 27, 29

Oh that these important instructions might, as it were, be ever sounding in our ears! It is matter of great *thankfulness* that *this earth*, which might have been abandoned by God as a *barren wilderness*, is cultivated as *his field*, and that any *good seed* is to be found in it; but *grievous* to think how many *tares* are intermingled, so as almost to overrun the ground, and hide *the wheat* from being seen. Let not a *forward zeal* prompt us, like these over-officious *servants*, to think of *rooting them out* by violence;

[g] *Shall send forth his* attendant angels.] The reader will observe how high an idea our Lord here gives them of himself, when he speaks of *the angels* as his *attendants*, who were at the last day to *wait on him*, and at *his order* to assemble the whole world before him.

[h] *Gnashing of teeth.*] Since what is here spoken of is supposed to pass *in a furnace of fire*, it is strange that any should have imagined that ὁ βρυγμὸς τῶν ὀδόντων signifies the *knocking*, or, as we commonly express it, the *chattering of the teeth*, through excess of cold. Yet some have been weak enough to argue from hence, that (according to the Mahometan notion,) the alternative extremities of *heat* and *cold* should constitute the *torment of the damned*. See Archbishop Dawes's Sermons on Hell, serm. iii. p. 14.

but let us *wait our Master's time*, and be patient till *the day of the Lord*. SECT. LXVII.

The *separation* will at length be made; nor shall *one precious grain* perish. Awful important time! when *the angels* shall perform their great office, with a *sagacity* too sharp to be eluded, and a *power* too strong to be resisted! *Gather not our souls, O Lord, with sinners!* but may they be *bound up in the bundle of life!* that when *the day cometh which shall burn as an oven*, and when *the wicked like chaff* shall be thrown in *to be consumed*, we may survey the *execution* of the *divine judgment*, with awful triumph; being owned by God as *his*, while he is *making up his jewels, and spared by him as his obedient children*. (Mal. iii. 17, and iv. 1.) Then shall we not only be *spared*, but *honoured* and adorned, and *shine forth like the sun in our Father's kingdom*; for these *vile bodies shall be fashioned like to the glorious body of our Redeemer*, (Phil. iii. 21.) and our purified and perfected *spirits* shall be clothed with proportionable *lustre*, and reflect the complete *image of his* holiness. Amen. Verse 41 42 43

SECT. LXVIII.

Our Lord adds other parables relating to the speedy progress of the gospel, and the importance of the blessings it proposes. Mark IV. 26—34. Mat. XIII. 31—35, 44—53.

MARK IV. 26.

MARK IV. 26. AND he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground,

AND after Jesus had delivered the foregoing parables, *he* went on with his discourse to the multitude, and farther *said*, *So is the kingdom of God*, and such the nature of the dispensation of the gospel in its progress, that it is like the growth of vegetables, and may fitly be illustrated by the case of a husbandman: for it is *as if a man should throw* his *seed upon the earth; And* after it is sown, *should* take no farther thought about it, but *sleep by night and rise by day*, and apply himself to other business: *and* in the mean time, without his thought and care, *the seed should spring up and increase, he knows not how*. *For the earth*, by a certain curious kind of mechanism, which the greatest philosophers cannot fully comprehend,[a] does, as it were, *spontaneously*, without any assistance SECT. LXVIII. Mark IV. 26.

27 And should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit

[a] By a curious kind of mechanism, &c.] The word *αὐτομάτη*, which is generally, in good authors applied to *artificial machines*, so naturally suggested this thought, that I could not forbear hinting at it. The reader may see a very elegant illustration of it, in Dr. Watts's Philosophical Essays No. ix. § 2.

SECT. LXVIII.

from man, carry it through the whole progress of vegetation; and *produces first the blade, then the ear*, and *afterward the full grain in the ear.*

Mark IV. 29. *But* at the proper season for it, *as soon as the fruit is ripe, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest is come;* and all that remains, is to receive the bountiful provision which the great Lord of all has produced by his own power. By such insensible degrees shall the gospel gain ground in the world, and ripen to a harvest of glory: and therefore let not my faithful servants be discouraged, if the effect of their labours be not immediately so conspicuous as they could desire;[b] a future crop may spring up, and the Son of man will in due time appear to gather it in.

30 *And he* made a pause in his discourse, and then *said*, I am thinking, *whereunto shall we compare the kingdom of God? or with what parable shall we* place it in such a point of light, as farther to *illustrate it.*

Mat. XIII. 31. After which reflection, *he proposed another parable to them, saying, The kingdom of heaven*, of which I am speaking, or the interest of the gospel in the world, *is like a grain of mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field* to raise and propagate the plant:

Mark IV. 31. It is, I say, like this grain, *which indeed, when* at first *it is sown in the earth, is* very small and inconsiderable, and [*one of*] *the least*

32 *of all the seeds that are* cast *in the ground:*[c]

of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

30 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

MAT. XIII. 31. Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field: [MARK IV. 31—]

[MARK IV.—31. Which [indeed] when it is sown in the earth, is [the least of all seeds] that be in the earth: [MAT. XIII. 32.—]

32 But when it is

[b] *Let not my faithful servants be discouraged, &c.*] It cannot be the design of this parable to encourage private Christians to imagine, that religion will flourish in their own souls, without proper cultivation; or to lead ministers to expect that it will flourish in their people, while they neglect due application in private as well as public. I hope therefore the reader will acquiesce with me in the paraphrase given above; supposing that our Lord meant to intimate, that his apostles and other ministers were not to estimate their usefulness merely by their immediate and visible success; but might hope that, by their preaching, a seed would be left in the hearts of many, which might afterwards produce happy fruit. On these principles, I doubt not but our Lord's preaching greatly promoted the signal success of the apostles; (to which he might in part refer, John iv. 38, p. 177), and I hope the remark may sometimes be applicable to our labours, especially with respect to those who, having enjoyed a religious education, and being restrained from grosser irregularities have not been so far as others, from the kingdom of God. There can be no reason to interpret this (as Grotius and Dr. Clarke have done) of Christ only; he does not *go away and sleep;* and he perfectly *knows how the seed springs up:* on the other hand, every faithful minister may be said to put in his sickle, as having his part in the final harvest. (See John iv. 36, p. 176.)

[c] *The least of all the seeds, &c.*] Or *one of the least;* and so small, that it was proverbially used to signify *a very little thing.* (Compare Mat. xvii. 20. sect. xci.) See Lightfoot's Hor. Hebr. on Mat. xiii. 32.

nown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs; [and becometh a tree,] and shooteth out great branches, so that the fowls of the air may [come and lodge in the branches, *and*] under the shadow of it. [MAT. XIII.—32.]

But when it is sown some time in the earth, *it grows up* to a surprising degree, *and becomes greater than all* other *herbs; yea*, I may even say, *it becomes a tree, and shoots out great branches, so* large and thick, *that the birds of the air may* build their nests in it, and *come and lodge in its branches*,[d] [*and*] harbour *under its shadow*. In such a remarkable manner did our Lord intimate, that his gospel should prevail amidst all opposition; and, inconsiderable as its beginnings were, should spread itself abroad through the whole world, so as to afford weary and fearful souls a grateful and secure retreat. SECT. LXVIII. Mark IV. 32.

MAT. XIII. 33. Another parable spake he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

He also *spake another parable to them*, to the same purpose with the former, which, like the rest, was taken from a very familiar circumstance daily occurring in life: *The kingdom of heaven*, said he, or the cause of the gospel, *is like* a little *leaven, which a woman took and covered up in three measures of meal*; and though it seemed lost for a while in the mass of dough, it secretly wrought through it by a speedy, though insensible fermentation, *till* at length *the whole was leavened*. Thus shall the gospel spread in the world, and influence and assimilate the temper and conduct of men. Mat. XIII. 33.

34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; [and with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear *it*;] and without a parable spake he not unto them: [MARK IV. 33, 34.—]

All these things Jesus spake to the multitude in parables; and with many other *such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear* and receive [*it*;] well knowing that so many enemies were then hovering round him, that, had he declared the mysteries of his kingdom in plainer terms, he would have been in continual danger, and must, without a series of repeated miracles, have been cut off by their malice: *and* upon this account, *without a parable he spake not* any thing, in all that he delivered *to them* on that day; *That* so *it might be* seen, 34

35 That it might be fulfilled which

that passage was remarkably *fulfilled* in him,[e] 35

[d] *Come and lodge in its branches.*] The Talmud mentions a mustard tree so large, that a man might with ease sit in it; and another, one of whose branches covered a tent: (see Tremell. Not. in loc. and Lightfoot's Hor. Hebr.) And it is certain, we shall be much mistaken, if we judge of vegetables or animals, in the eastern and southern countries, merely by what those of the same species are among us. See Raphel. Annotat. ex Herodoto. p. 163.

[e] *That it might be fulfilled.*] So many scriptures are thus quoted by way of allusion, that I cannot think it necessary to suppose, as some late ingenious writers have done, that these words did not originally belong to the seventy-eighth Psalm, but are a fragment of some other, describing the manner in which the Mes-

SECT. LXVIII.

which was spoken by the prophet, (Psal. lxxviii. 2.) and that he might with the utmost propriety adopt those words that Asaph had delivered,

Mat. XIII. 35 *saying,* "*I will open my mouth in parables, I* "*will give vent to* dark sayings of old, even to "*things* which have been *hid from the founda-* "*tion of the world.*" For thus did Jesus teach important truths that were before unknown, in a manner something obscure, though to the attentive mind peculiarly impressing.

was spoken by the prophet saying, I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

Mark IV. 34. *And* after he had sent away the multitude, and was retired from them, *he* freely *expounded all* these *things to his disciples when they were alone* with him.

MARK IV. —34. And when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

Mat. XIII. 44. And when he had given them the foremen-tioned explication of the parable of the tares, he *again* added some other parables to the same purpose, to promote the diligence, zeal, and resolution of his disciples, in searching into, and teaching these great and important truths, in which the glory of God, and the salvation of souls were so much concerned. Particularly, he said to them, The happiness to which *the kingdom of heaven,* or the gospel-dispensation, is designed to conduct men, *is like* an immense *treasure hid in a field, which when a man has found, he hides* and covers up again with all possible care; *and,* in the transport he is in *for joy of it, goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field* at any rate, as being sure that it will abundantly answer the price.

MAT. XIII. 44. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

45 Or *again,* to represent the matter in a like instance, that I may fix it yet more deeply on your minds,[r] *The kingdom of heaven is* in this respect *like,* or may be illustrated by the similitude of *a merchant,* who goes about from one country to another, *seeking* the largest and most

46 *beautiful pearls,*[s] and other fine jewels; *Who finding one pearl of an exceeding great value,* offered to him on very advantageous terms, would

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls;

46 Who when he had found one pearl of great price, he

siah was to preach. (See Jeffreys's Review, p. 117.) They have a plain connection with the following verses, and might perhaps be a kind of preface to all Asaph's Psalms, in which there are some dark sayings, though the greatest part of the seventy-eighth is very clear.

[r] [Fix it yet more deeply on your minds.] Considering the many trials they were shortly to expect, it was proper the thought should thus be inculcated upon them by a variety of figures.

[s] *Beautiful pearls.*] The sacred writers elsewhere compare and prefer *wisdom* to *jewels.* See Job xxviii. 15—19; Prov. iii. 15; and viii. 11.

went and sold all that he had and bought it.

by no means slip the opportunity, but presently *went away, and sold all that he had, and bought it;* as well knowing he should be a considerable gainer, though he should part with all he was possessed of for it. Thus, though a resolute profession of my gospel may indeed cost you dear, yet it will, on the whole, be infinitely for your advantage, and richly repay all your losses. SECT. LXVIII. Mat. XIII. 46

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind;

But see to it, that you are in good earnest in your religion, and do not impose upon yourselves by an empty profession: for, to add one parable more, which I shall *again* borrow from an object with which some of you have been very conversant, The success of *the kingdom of heaven* in the world, *is like* that of *a net thrown into the sea, which gathered* in [*fishes*] *of all sorts; Which, when* the fishermen perceived that *it was full, they dragged to the shore, and sitting down* there, to survey the draught that they had made, *gathered the good into* proper *vessels, but threw away the bad,*[h] as not worth their regard. So mixed and undistinguished here are the characters of those who profess the gospel, which, as it is preached promiscuously to all, gathers in persons of all sorts, and hypocrites as well as true believers are brought into the visible church. But an exact survey will finally be taken of the whole; and *so it will be* shewn at last, how great a difference there is between them, by the assignment of their state: for *at the end of the world, the angels shall come forth* in the general resurrection, *and separate the wicked from among the just,* with whom they often have been joined before, even in the same religious society and in the participation of the same external privileges; *And* they *shall cast them into a furnace of fire,* the seat of the damned; where their torments shall never end, but *there shall be* incessant *wailing, and gnashing of teeth,* for rage and despair. 47 48 49 50

48 Which when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just;

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things?

Then *Jesus saith unto them, Have ye,* with the key to them which I before gave you, *un-* 51

[h] *But threw away the bad.*] The word σαπρα, which we render *bad*, generally signifies *corrupt* or *putrid*, and seems an allusion to the drawing up some dead fish in a net with the living. Mr. Horberry justly observes, that this in the strongest terms represents the hopeless state of sinners at last. See his Discourse of future punishment, p. 29.

SECT. LXVIII. Mat. XIII. 52

derstood all these things? They say unto him, Yes, Lord, we clearly understand them. *And he said to them,* See *therefore,* that as you understand them, you make a good use of them, for your own advantage, and that of others: for *every scribe who is disciplined* in the mysteries and has attained *to* the knowledge of *the kingdom of heaven,* or every faithful minister who is fit for his work, *is like a housekeeper, who* lays in a variety of goods for use, and keeps them in such order, that he readily *brings forth out of his store, things new and old,* as the several occasions of life require, dispensing them in such a manner as may best suit the case of those who are under his care.

derstood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord,
52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

53 *And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables,* which he added to those he had spoken in public, *he departed thence* that evening, to shun the farther importunity of the people, and crossed the sea with some remarkable circumstances, which will be mentioned below.

53 And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. xiii. 52.

LET us be concerned to *gather up these fragments, that nothing may be lost;* and to lay them up in our memories and our hearts, that according to our respective stations in life, we may have them *ready for use.*

Mark iv. 26—29.

Let us remember, that sometimes the *growth of piety* in the heart, *is like* that of *vegetables in the earth.* The *seed of the word* may for a while *seem lost;* or when the *fruit* appears, it may advance and ripen but *slowly.* Let not *ministers* therefore too confidently conclude, they have *laboured in vain, and spent their strength for nought,* because the *fields* are not immediately *white to the harvest;* but with believing hope, and humble patience, let them recommend *the seed that they have sown* to Him, who, by the secret energy of his continued influences, can give at length a sure and plentiful *increase.*

Mat. xiii. 31, 32.

When *Jesus took to himself his great power, and reigned,* the *gospel,* which had gained so little ground under his *personal* ministration, *ran, and was* greatly *glorified,* in the hands of the *apostles.* The *grain of mustard seed* shot up and branched forth into a *spreading tree,* and *birds* of every wing took shelter there: (Oh that there had been none of the *ravenous* and the *obscene kind!*) Thus when the Lord shall please to *hasten it in his time, a little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation.* (Isa. lx. 22.)

Let us pray, that the triumphant *progress* of his *kingdom may come.* In the mean time, let it be our desire, that the *principles of the gospel* may, like a sacred kind of *leaven*, diffuse themselves through our whole souls; that all our powers and faculties, that all our thoughts and passions, may be, as it were, impregnated and elevated by them. Let us remember the *value* of the blessings it proposes; and regarding *Christ* as the *pearl of great price*, and *heaven* as that immense *treasure*, in which alone we can be for ever rich and happy, let us be willing to *part with all* to secure it, if we are called to such a trial.

SECT. LXVIII. Ver. 33. 44—46

It is not enough that we are *nominal Christians*, or possessed of the common privileges of the church: the *day* of final *separation* will come, and the *angels* employed in the work will not overlook us, but conduct us to the abodes of the *righteous* or the *wicked.* Oh that we may not then be *cast* with abhorrence *into the furnace of fire!* but now seriously realizing to ourselves this awful *day*, of which *our Lord* has given such repeated prospects, may we so *judge ourselves*, that we may not then be *condemned* of him! 47—50

SECT. LXIX.

Our Lord having given some remarkable answer to some who seemed disposed to follow him, passes over the lake, and stills a mighty tempest as he was crossing it. Mat. VIII. 18—27. Mark IV. 35, *to the end.* Luke VIII. 22—25. IX. 57, *to the end.*

MARK IV. 35.

MARK IV. 35.

AND the same day when the even was come, [when Jesus saw great multitudes about him,]

NOW *in the evening of the same day,*[a] on which the parables that we have been relating were delivered, *when Jesus saw great multitudes* still waiting *about him,*[b] purposing

SECT. LXIX. Mark IV. 35.

[a] *In the evening of the same day.*] Or, *that very day, when it was evening*; for these are the express words of the evangelist; εν εκεινη τη ημερα οψιας γενομενης: and indeed they are so express that I am amazed any critics, who do not suppose he was mistaken, can pretend it was not *the same day*; which yet Dr. Clarke does, as if the phrase meant nothing more, than *one day towards evening.* I dare not take so great a freedom with the sacred author, and have therefore been obliged to transpose, though not to contradict Matthew.—This indeed appears one of the busiest days of Christ's life, as all the events and discourses recorded from his miraculous cure of the demoniac, who was blind and dumb, (sect. lxi. p. 335.) happened in it; nevertheless, I see no absurdity in supposing, that all these things might pass in less than *twelve hours.* Compare note [c] on Mat. xii. 22, p. 335.

[b] *Great multitudes still waiting about him.*] They sometimes staid with or near him several days together; (compare Mat. xv. 32, sect. lxxxvi.) And it seems, that now they staid a while after Christ had dismissed them, perhaps with a prayer or benediction; (Mat. xiii. 36. p. 367.) for on his coming down again to the shore, the disciples joined with him in persuading them to disperse; which, when they saw him determined to cross the sea, they would the more readily do; for so we may conclude from what Mark says above, ver. 36. that, just as he took shipping, they (that is, Jesus and his dis-

SECT. LXIX.

Mark IV. 35.

for a little while to retire from them, *he* came out of the house, and *went into a ship*, which stood by the neighbouring shore, *with* those of *his disciples* with whom he had just been discoursing; *and said unto them, Let us go over* 36 *unto the other side of the lake. And when they had dismissed the multitude*, and had at length persuaded them to withdraw, *they took him* just *as he was in the ship*,[c] without any farther provision for their passage.

[LUKE, he went into a ship with his disciples; and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake.] [MAT. VIII. 18.— LUKE VIII. 22.—]

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship.

But before we relate the particulars of their voyage, we shall here take occasion to add two or three little occurrences, one of which happened at this time.

Mat. VIII. 19.

And first *it came to pass, that as they went in the way*,[d] from the house out of which he came, to the shore where he proposed to embark, *a certain scribe*, pleased with his entertaining parables, and concluding from the tenor of some of them,[e] as well as from the zeal with which the people flocked about him, that he would soon become a mighty prince, on declaring himself the Messiah, *came* with all the appearance of profound respect, *and said unto him*,

MAT. VIII. 19. And [it came to pass, that as they went in the way,] a certain scribe came, and said unto him, [Lord and]

ciples, sent them away. And this appears to me to be the easiest way to reconcile this difference, which is none of the least.

[c] *They took him as he was in the ship.*] This may seem an objection against the solution proposed in the last note; but I think the turn given in the paraphrase may remove it. If any are not satisfied with that answer, they must suppose that Christ's going into an house, mentioned by Matthew, was *some time after*; which seems not so natural a sense of Matthew's words. (See Mat. xiii. 36, with note [f], p. 367.) But had that appeared to me the meaning of them, it would only have occasioned the alteration of a clause or two in the paraphrase: for it would have been improper to have divided the explication of the parable of the tares from the parable itself.

[d] *As they went in the way.*] As this and the next story are inserted by Matthew between his account of Christ's giving entertainment to cross the lake, and his [illegible]ing into the ship to do it, (see Mat. both h[illegible]—23.) I cannot but conclude they quently happened at this time; and consequently by saying that when Luke introduces it his meaning it was *as they went in the way*, [illegible]y must be at large, one day as Christ and his disciples were walking; and not (as Sir Isaac Newton supposes,) as they went on in that journey in which the Samaritans had refused him a lodging. The following words would indeed have been proper on that occasion; but they had also an universal propriety, as Christ had no house or stated lodging of his own, and was now going over to a place where we do not find he had any acquaintance. But if any think St. Luke's expression too strong to bear this interpretation, they must, if they would not impeach St. Matthew's account of it, conclude that this little occurrence happened twice, as it is very possible it might.

[e] Concluding from the tenor of some of them.] The parables of the mustard-seed and the leaven, were both spoken before the multitude, (Mat. xiii. 31, 34, p. 370, 371.) and they were both so plain, that the disciples did not ask Christ to expound them; as indeed one can hardly imagine how any explication could have made them more intelligible.—The scribe's forsaking Christ, on the declaration he made of his destitute circumstances, makes it evident he was actuated by these views.

SECT. LXIX.

Mat. VIII. 19.

Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. [LUKE IX. 57.]

O thou great *Lord* [*and*] *Master*, who hast another kind of authority than we scribes can pretend to, (Mat. vii. 29, p. 251.) I beseech thee to give me leave to attend thee in thy passage: for I am determined, that *I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest*, and devote myself entirely to the service of thy kingdom.

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head. [LUKE IX. 58.]

20 *And Jesus*, knowing the motives which engaged him to this resolution, *saith unto him*, Do not flatter yourself with the expectation of any temporal advantages from such an attendance; for I plainly tell you, that whereas (not to speak of domestic animals, which are under the care of man,) even *the* very *foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests*, for themselves and their young; *yet the Son of man*, successful as his kingdom must at length be, does now appear in such low circumstances, that he *has not* so much as a place *where he may lay his head:* he knows not one day where he shall find food and lodging the next; and his followers must expect no better a condition. A declaration sufficient to deter a person who sought nothing but his present interest and advantage.

21 And [he said unto] another of his disciples, [Follow me: but he] said unto him, Lord suffer me first to go and bury my father. [LUKE IX. 59.]

21 *And to another of his disciples*, who had for some time attended his discourses, *he said*, *Follow me* statedly, as these my servants do, that thou mayest be trained up to take thy part with them in the ministry of the gospel. *But he said unto him*, *Lord*, I will most gladly do it; yet I beg thou wouldest *first permit me to go* home *and bury my* aged *father*,[f] to whose remains I am going to pay my last duty.

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead; [but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.] [LUKE IX. 60.]

22 *But Jesus*, who thought it proper on this occasion to make an extraordinary trial of his faith and obedience, *said* again *unto him*, *Follow thou me* immediately; *and leave the dead to bury their dead:* let those who are themselves spiritually dead, perform the rites of funeral; yea, let the dead remain unburied, rather than disobey my word when I give thee so great a commission; or than neglect it *but* one day when I say, as I now do, *Go thou and preach* this gospel of *the kingdom of God*,[g] which thou hast heard, and shalt farther hear from me.

[f] *To go* home *and bury my* aged *father.*] Some think that this expression only intimates, his father was *so old* that he could not *live long;* but Christ's answer seems to take it for granted he was *already dead.*

[g] *Go thou and preach the kingdom of God.*] As our Lord called him now to follow him.

SECT. LXIX. Luke IX. 61.

And at a certain time,[h] *another also said, Lord, I will* presently *follow thee; but permit me first to* go and settle the affairs of my family, and *take my leave of them which are at my house*,[i] as Elisha was permitted to do when called in so extraordinary a manner to the prophetic office, (1 Kings xix. 20.) *And Jesus said unto him*, Take heed that no fond affection for any who may stand related to thee, nor any solicitous concern about thy temporal affairs, prevent thee from executing the important purpose thou hast formed of devoting thyself to my service; for *no man having* once *laid his hand on the plough, and* afterwards *looking back, is fit for* the service of *the kingdom of God*;[k] as indeed, if the work of ploughing the ground require that a man should look before him, and resolutely mind what he is about, you may easily imagine, that the duties of a gospel minister will require a much more steady attention, and more firm resolution.

Luke IX. 61. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Mat. VIII. 23. *And* now, as it was said before, that Jesus was

Mat. VIII. 23.

we must conclude that this commission which he gives him to preach was not directly to be put in execution. The circumstance was plainly extraordinary, and might turn on reasons unknown to us. Christ might, for instance, foresee some particular obstruction that would have arisen from the interview with his friends at his father's funeral, which would have prevented his devoting himself to the ministry; to which he might refer in saying, *Let THE DEAD bury their dead.* I see no reason to suppose any regard to the priests being forbidden some usual ceremonies of mourning, which some have thought to be intended here.

[h] *At a certain time.*] This probably happened at another time; for it would have been very improper to have asked permission to go and bid his domestics farewell, when Christ had just made such an answer to the former: but the story is so short, and so much resembles the former, that I chose (as St. Luke also does,) to join them together. Nor do I think it any reflection on the evangelists, that they did not follow the order of time, provided they do not assert a regard to it wherethey vary from it.

[i] *Permit me first* to settle the affairs of my family, and *take my leave*, &c.] In this latitude I doubt not but the phrase εκτασασθαι τοις εις τον οικον μου is to be taken here, though it has something of a different signification, Luke xiv. 33, sect. cxxi. Intending to give up his possessions, he probably designed to *order how they should be distributed* among his friends; as Heinsius has very well explained the passage.

[k] *No man having laid his hand on the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.*] Hesiod has given it as the character of a good ploughman, that he keeps his mind intent on his work, that he may make a straight furrow, and does not allow himself to gaze about on his companions. (Hesiod Εργ. lib. ii. ver. 61—63.) Our Lord, on the like obvious principles, may use the phrase of *one that looks behind him while his hand is on the plough*, as a kind of proverbial expression for a careless irresolute person, who must be peculiarly unfit for the Christian ministry. How happy had it been for his church, had this lively admonition been regarded, without which it is impossible ορθοτομειν τον λογον της αληθειας *to divide* or rather *direct the word of truth aright*, 2 Tim. ii. 15. See Bos, Observ. cap. vi. p. 28—32.

SECT. LXIX.

about to cross the lake, *when he was entered into the ship, his disciples followed him; and they* directly *launched forth*, even as many as could conveniently get a passage in that vessel, or any others that were thereabouts; for they were all desirous to attend him; *and* several *other little ships were also with him. And as they were* Mat. VIII. 23. 24 *sailing* over the lake, Jesus laid himself down in the ship; and being wearied with the various labours of the day, *he fell asleep: and behold, there came down a violent storm of wind on the lake: and* on a sudden it was so tempestuous, that *there arose a great* and unusual *agitation in the sea*,[l] *insomuch that the vessel was* even *covered with the* swelling *waves, which beat into the ship, so that it was now full* of water, *and they were in extreme danger* of being cast away. *And* [*Jesus*] in the mean time, for the refresh- Mark IV. 38. ment of his weary body, as well as for the trial of their faith, *was asleep on a pillow in the stern of the ship*, being greatly fatigued with the labours of the day.[m] *And* when to all human appearance they were just sinking, *his disciples came to him, and awakened him, saying*, with great surprise and importunity, *Master, Master, is it no* manner of *concern to thee* that we are all of us in the utmost danger, and hast thou no regard to what we are exposed to in such a terrible extremity as this? *Lord, save us*, for *we are* just *perishing! And he says to them, Why are* Mat. *ye so* exceeding *timorous, O ye of little faith?* VIII. 26. Can you imagine that God would suffer Me to be lost in a tempest? or that I would consult my own safety in the neglect of yours? *Where is your faith?* and *how is it that you have no faith* in exercise on such an occasion, when you have had so many signal evidences both of my power and my tender care? And *then rising up*, with an air of Divine majesty and authority, *he rebuked the winds and the raging of the water, and said to the sea*, as a master might do to a company of turbulent servants, *Peace, be still: and* he had no sooner spok-

And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him: [Luke, and they launched forth:] [and there were also with him other little ships.] [Mark IV.—36. Luke VIII.—22.]

24 And behold [Luke, as they sailed, he fell asleep; and there came down a [great] storm of wind on the lake; and] there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves; [and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full;] [Luke, and they were in jeopardy.] [Mark IV. 37. Luke VIII. 23.]

Mark IV. 38. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: [and his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying,] Master, [Luke, Master,] carest thou not [Lord, save us; we perish.] [Mat. VIII. 25. Luke VIII. 24.—]

Mat. VIII. 26. And he saith unto them, Why are ye [so] fearful, O ye of little faith? [Luke, Where is your faith?] [How is it that ye have no faith?] Then he arose and rebuked the winds, [Luke, and the raging of the water:] [and said unto the sea, Peace, be still: and the wind

[l] *A great agitation in the sea.*] Σεισμὸς μέγας; properly signifies a *mighty agitation*; probably it was something of a hurricane.

[m] Fatigued with the labours of the day.] This we may reasonably conclude from a review of the preceding sections. See also the latter part of note [s] in the beginning of this section.

SECT. LXIX. Mat. VIII. 27

en, but *the wind rested, and there was* presently *a great calm. And the men* that were with him *were* greatly *amazed, and* struck with such a reverential awe that they *feared exceedingly, saying to each other; What a wonderful person is this, who* has not only power over diseases, but *commandeth even* the most tumultuous elements, *the winds and the sea; and* amidst all their rage and confusion, *they* humbly *obey him*, and are immediately composed at his command!

ceased,] and there was a great calm, [MARK IV. 39. 40. LUKE VIII. —24, 25.—]

27 But the men marvelled, [and they feared exceedingly, and said one to another,] What manner of man is this, that [LUKE, commandeth] even the winds and the sea, [LUKE, and they] obey him? [MARK IV. 41. LUKE VIII.—25.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. VIII. 27. How great and glorious does our blessed *Redeemer* appear, as having *all the elements* at his command, and exercising his dominion over the *winds and seas!* He stills the very *tempests* when they roar, and *makes the storm a calm*, (Psal. cvii. 29.) He silences at once the noise and fury of the tumultuous *waves*: and, in the midst of its confusion, says to the raging *sea, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed*, (Job xxxviii. 11.) Who would not reverence and *fear him!* Who would not cheerfully *commit themselves to him!* Under such a protection, how courageously may his *church* ride through every *storm*, and weather every *danger! Christ* is
24 still with her, and she is safe even while he may seem to be *sleeping*. Blessed *Jesus!* that power of thine which here commanded the *tempest* into a *calm*, can easily silence all our tumultuous *passions*, and reduce our souls to that blessed *tranquillity*, in which alone we can be capable of enjoying thee and ourselves.

May we still be applying to *Christ* with such importunate
25 addresses; and, sensible how much we need his help, may we cry out, *Lord, save us, or we perish!* And may it be the language, not of suspicion and terror, but of *faith*; of a *faith* determined at all adventures to adhere to him, whatever dangers are to be encountered, or whatever advantages are to be resigned.

20 Did his compassion for us, and his desire of our salvation engage him to submit to such *destitute* and calamitous *circumstances*, that when *the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, the Son of man* himself *had not* a place *where he might lay* that sacred *head*, which with infinite mutual complacency and delight he had so often reposed *in the bosom of the Father!* May our zeal and love animate us cheerfully to take our part in his *indigence* and *distress*, if he calls us to it!

May no considerations of *ease* or *interest*, or even of human *friendship*, lead us to turn a deaf ear to the *calls of duty*; or suf-
21 fer us, when we once have *engaged in his service* to think of *deserting it*, lest on the whole we should be judged *unfit for the*

kingdom of God! May thy grace, O *Lord*, animate our souls that nothing may prevent our *faithfulness unto death*, and so deprive us of that *crown of life*, which thy grace has promised to such a character! (Rev. ii. 10.) SECT. LXIX. Luke IX. 62.

SECT. LXX.

Christ being arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, dispossesses two demoniacs; and permitting the evil spirits to enter into a herd of swine, is desired by the inhabitants to withdraw; and so returns to the western side of the sea. Mat. VIII. 28, *to the end.* IX. 1. Mark. V. 1—21. Luke VIII. 26—40.

MARK V. 1.

Mark V. 1. AND they came over unto the other side of the sea, [Luke, and arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, [*or* Gergesenes,] which is over-against Galilee.] [Mat. VIII. 28. —Luke VIII. 26.]

AND after they were thus delivered from the danger of the storm, *they came over to the other side of the sea* of Tiberias, *and arrived at the country of the Gadarenes;* a territory belonging, [*or*] at least adjacent, to that of the ancient *Gergesenes*, or Girgashites, (see Gen. x. 16; xv. 21; Deut. vii. 1; and Josh. iii. 10.) *which is* situated *over-against Galilee;* being that tract of land which fell to the half-tribe of Manasseh beyond Jordan, and was afterwards called Trachonitis. SECT. LXX. Mark V. 1.

2 And when he was come out of the ship, [Luke, to land,] immediately there met him [two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, ex-

2 *And when he was landed out of the ship,* he was no sooner got ashore, but *there immediately met him two men*[a] *possessed with demons, coming out of the sepulchres,*[b] which were in a burying-place near the city, whither they had fled as to a place affording them some shelter, and suiting their gloomy imaginations; and they were both of them *exceeding fierce*, and

[a] *There met him two men.*] Mark and Luke mention only *one*, who probably was the *fiercer* of the *two*; but this is no way inconsistent with the account that Matthew gives.—I cannot but observe here, that Mark tells this story in all other respects so much more circumstantially than Matthew, that it abundantly proves that his gospel was not (as Mr. Whiston maintains in his Harmony,) an abridgement of Matthew. The same remark may arise from comparing Mark v. 22—43 with Mat. ix. 18—26; and Mark ix. 17—27 with Mat. xvii 14—18, and some other parallel passages; but to mention histories recorded by Mark, and not to be found in Matthew. See Mr. Jones's Vindication of St. Matthew's Gospel, chap. vii. and ix.

[b] *Coming out of the sepulchres.*] Grotius supposes, that the *demons* chose to drive the men that they possessed among the tombs, to confirm some superstitious notions of the Jews, relating to the power of evil spirits over the dead. The heathens had undoubtedly such notions: but I rather think, with Elsner, the demoniacs chose the caves of this burying ground as a kind of shelter: and he has shewn, that wretches in extremity, sometimes did the like. See Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 65—68.

SECT. LXX. Mark V. 2.

mischievous, *so that no one could* safely *pass by that way:* and [*one of these was*] *a certain man of the city with an unclean spirit, that had been* known to be *possessed with demons for a* 3 *long time; Who* was so terribly outrageous that he *wore no clothes, nor would abide in any house, but had his dwelling* sometimes in the burying ground, *among the tombs;* and sometimes in a desert, or a common, that lay near it;[c] *and* was under so strong an operation of the diabolical power, that *no one could confine him even with* 4 *chains: For he had often been bound with fetters and chains; yet* in a most surprising manner *the chains were broken asunder by him, and the fetters were beaten to pieces; and,* after all the methods that had been taken with him, *no one was able to tame him,* either by force or entreaties, or any kind of exorcism that had been 5 tried upon him. *And he was always night and day upon the mountains, and among the tombs, crying out* in a terrible manner; *and,* when there was nobody else to spend his rage upon, *cutting himself with* sharp pieces of the *stones* he found there.

6 *And when he saw Jesus afar off,* the demon that possessed him was so over-awed, that *he* immediately *ran and fell down* upon his face *before him* with all the appearance of the greatest reverence, *and worshipped him: And crying out with a loud voice, he said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God?* I am not come here to enter into any contest with thee, and *I beseech* [*and*] *adjure thee by* that *God* whose Son thou art, *that thou do not* exert the power which thou hast to *torment me:* I know there will be a season when thou wilt have an ample triumph over me; but *art thou come hither to torment us before the time* allotted for our final punishment?[d] And this he spoke as he was acted by the demon that

ceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way;] [LUKE, a certain man out of the city,] with an unclean spirit, [LUKE, which had devils a long time:] [MAT. VIII.—28. LUKE VIII. 27.—]

3 Who [wore no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but] had *his* dwelling among the tombs, and no man could bind him, no not with chains:—[LUKE VIII.—27.]

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces; neither could any man tame him.

5 And always night and day he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran, [and fell down before him,] and worshipped him; [LUKE VIII. 28.—]

7 And cried [LUKE, out] with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? [LUKE, I beseech thee,] I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not: [art thou come hither to tor-

[c] *A desert, or a common, that lay near it.*] So it is said by Luke, ver. 29, that he was *driven into the wilderness.*

[d] *Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?*] There was such a reference to the final sentence, which Christ is to pass upon those *vessels of wrath* in the *judgment of the great day,* to which they are reserved, (Jude, ver. 6.) as could not be dictated by lunacy; and it is much to be questioned, whether either the person speaking, or any of the hearers, but Christ himself, understood the sense and propriety of it.

ment us before the time?] [MAT. VIII. 29. LUKE VIII. 28.]

LUKE VIII. 29. (For he had commanded the unclean spirit, [*and* said unto him, Come out of the man thou unclean spirit.] For oftentimes it had caught him; and he was kept bound with chains, and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.) [MARK V. 8.]

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? [and he answered, saying, My name is Legion; for we are many:] because many devils were entered into him. [—MARK V. 9.]

31 And they besought him [much,] that he would not [send them away out of the country, *and*]

possessed him; who was afraid of being drawn away: *For* Jesus was so moved with pity and compassion at the sight of such a miserable spectacle, that *he* already *had commanded the unclean spirit*, [*and*] *said* with an air of authority *to him*, *Come out of the man*, *thou unclean spirit*. *For* (as it was observed before,) *it had often seized him* in a most violent manner; *and* notwithstanding *he was bound with chains*, *and kept* under the closest confinement *in fetters*, yet none of them were strong enough to hold him, but he would still break loose; *and having broke* and torn off all *the bonds* that they could fix upon him, *he was driven by the* impetuous impulse of the raging *demon into the desert places*, where the burying ground lay.

And Jesus asked the evil spirit that was in *him*, *saying*, *What is thy name? And he answered*, *saying*, *My name is Legion*; *for we are many*.[e] And this reply was not without some reason, *because* the evil spirit that possessed the man had many others with him, and *a multitude of demons had entered into him*, and had been suffered to unite their malice and power in harassing and tormenting the wretched creature.

And as they found that Jesus was determined to dislodge them, *they earnestly entreated him that he would not send them* quite away *out of the country*;[f] hoping, that if they had permission to hover still about it, they might do something to obstruct the progress of the gospel, against which their chief efforts were centered: [*and*] they particularly were importunate that

SECT. LXX. Luke VIII. 29

30

31

[e] *My name is Legion, for we are many.*] There is no need of concluding from hence, that the number of these evil spirits was exactly the same with that of a Roman legion, which was now upwards of six thousand. (See Pitisc. Lex. de Legione.) It was a phrase that was often made use of to express a *great number*; (see Lightf. Hor Hebr. on Mar. v. 9.)—It is observable, that Luke here adds, that *many demons were entered into him*; so that it is evident, he thought it not a mere *lunacy*, but a real *possession*. Probably a band of evil spirits united in the vexation of this wretched creature; but in what manner and order, it is impossible for us to say, who know so little of *invisible beings*.

[f] *That he would not send them out of the country.*] It seems from Dan. x. 13—20, that *different evil genii* preside over *distinct regions*, by the direction of Satan their prince. These who perhaps were spirits of distinguished abilities, might be appointed to reside hereabouts, to oppose as much as possible the beneficial designs of Christ; and having made their observations on the characters and circumstances of the inhabitants, they might be capable of doing more mischief *here* than elsewhere, and on that account might desire leave to continue on the spot.

SECT. LXX.

he would not *command them to go out into the* bottomless *abyss*, the prison in which many of the fallen spirits are detained, and to which some who may, like these, have been permitted for a while to range at large, are sometimes by divine justice and power remanded. (Compare Rev. xx. 1—3; 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude, ver. 6; and see Grotius in loc.

command them to go out into the deep. [MARK V. 10.]

Luke VIII. 31.

Mark V. 11.

Now there was there within their view, *at a considerable distance from them, on the mountains* near the sea-shore, *a great herd of many swine feeding on the mountain*; for, unclean as those animals were, the Jews in that country bred up great numbers of them out of regard to the gain of such merchandise, which they sold to the Roman soldiers, and other Gentiles who were very numerous in these parts.[g] *And all the demons* which had possessed this miserable creature (set upon doing all the mischief that they could, though they were under such a sensible restraint, and desirous to bring an odium upon Jesus as the author of mischief) *entreated him* again, *saying* to him, *If thou* art determined, after all we have said, that thou wilt *cast us out* of this man, *send* [*us, or*] *give us leave to go away to the herd of swine* which is feeding yonder, *that we may enter into them*; for we have no power of hurting even them without thy leave. *And immediately Jesus permitted them* to do it; partly to punish those who dealt in so infamous a commodity, *and* chiefly to prove the reality of a diabolical agency in these cases,[h] and to display the malice of

MARK V. 11. Now there was there [a good way off from them,] nigh unto the mountains, a great herd of [many] swine feeding [LUKE, on the mountain.] [MAT. VIII. 30, LUKE VIII. 32.—]

12 And all the devils besought him, saying, [If thou cast us out,] send us [or suffer us to go away] into the [herd of] swine, that we may enter into them. [MAT. VIII. 31. LUKE VIII.—32.]

13 And forthwith Jesus gave them

[g] Which they sold to the Roman soldiers, and other Gentiles, &c.] The laws of Hyrcanus had indeed prohibited the Jews from keeping swine, (which shews it had been much practised among them;) but these Gadarenes who had so many Gentiles in the neighbourhood, having long been under heathen government, (Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xv. cap. 7. (al. 11,) § 3; & Bell. Jud. lib. i. cap. 20. (al. 15.) § 3.) and living in the extreme part of the country, presumed to do it, scandalous and illegal as the employment was. See Miracles of Jesus Vindicated, p. 34, 35.

[h] To prove the reality of a diabolical agency in these cases.] The cavils against this miracle are equally malicious and weak. *Our Lord's permitting the evil spirits to enter into the swine*, was not properly *sending them* into those beasts; or if he had done it, the punishment to the owners would have been just; or had it been less apparently so, his extraordinary character as a prophet, and the proofs he gave of a divine co-operation, would have set him above our censure in an action, the full reasons of which we might not perfectly have known.—But though this solution is to me very satisfactory, it is not necessary to have recourse to it; for this action evidently appears both wise and gracious; inasmuch as it unanswerably demonstrated at once the malice of Satan and the extent of Christ's power over him. No

leave, [and said unto them, Go.] And the unclean spirits went out [Luke, of the man,] and entered into the [herd of] swine: and [behold,] the [whole] herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were choked in the sea, [and perished in the waters:] *and* they were about two thousand. [MAT. VIII. 32. Luke VIII. 33.]

14 And they that fed the swine, [Luke, when they saw what was done,] fled, and told [every thing] in the city, and in the country. [and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.] And they went out to see what it was that was done. [MAT. VIII. 33. LUKE VIII. 34, 35.—]

15 And they come to Jesus, and see [the man] that was pos-

those evil spirits: he therefore *said unto them,* You may *go,* since you desire it, and operate on those creatures as you please. *And* upon this *the unclean spirits went* directly *out of the man* whom they had possessed, *and entered into the herd of swine: and* such was the strange effect of their power, that, *behold, the whole herd* immediately grew mad, and *ran violently down a precipice into the sea,*[i] *and were* all *suffocated in the sea, and perished in the waters*[k]; *being* in number *about two thousand.* SECT. LXX. Mark V. 13.

And the swine-herds, seeing what was done, 14 *fled* in great amazement, some one way and some another, *and told all* the story, both *in the city and country; and* circumstantially related *what had happened to the* two *demoniacs,* and how the demons had been ejected from them. *And* when the people heard it, they were so much impressed with the report, that *they went out* in crowds *to see what was done,* and to satisfy themselves, on the testimony of their own senses, as to the truth of so unparalleled a fact.

And when they came to Jesus, and saw the demoniac (even him *that had* been tormented by *the legion,* and *out of whom the demons were departed,*) calmly *sitting at the feet of Jesus* to 15

miracles are more suspicious than pretended *dispossessions,* as there is so much room for collusion in them; but it was self-evident, that a herd of swine could not be confederates in any fraud: their death, therefore, in this instructive and convincing circumstance, was ten thousand times a greater blessing to mankind, than if they had been slain for food, as was intended.

i *The whole herd ran violently down a precipice into the sea.*] This story is an unanswerable demonstration of the error of the hypothesis advanced by the author of the late Inquiry into the Case of the Demoniacs, &c. (mentioned before in notes on Luke iv. 33, p. 199.) That ingenious writer is forced to suppose *these swine frightened by the two madmen,* and so *driven down the precipice:* but, not to mention the absurdity of supposing their lunacy thus to rage after Christ had spoken the healing word, one might venture to appeal to any body, that has observed what awkward creatures swine are to drive, whether it would be possible, without a *miracle,* for *two men* to drive *twenty,* and much less *two thousand* of them into the water. It is a pitiable thing to see a writer of such a character reduced to so hard a shift. He seems indeed to think the common notion of possessions absurd and dangerous, and certainly opposes it with a very good design: but it is hard to say, how Christ could have encouraged that notion more than by his conduct on this occasion; and I doubt not but this extraordinary occurrence was permitted chiefly to prove the reality of these possessions, and will always be effectual for the conviction of every impartial inquirer.

k *And were all suffocated, and perished in the waters.*] The display of the malignity of these demons, in this instance, served to illustrate the value of every miracle of this kind, and to display the grace, as well as power of Christ in every dispossession; in which view, this circumstance appears to have been determined with great wisdom and goodness, though folly and perverseness have so strangely disguised it.

SECT. LXX.

receive his instructions, *and* now decently *clothed and* perfectly *composed*, as being restored to his right mind, they were struck with such a mixture of astonishment and reverence, that they *were afraid* of conversing with so great a prophet, and dreaded the farther effects of his power. (Compare Luke v. 8. sect. XXXIV.)

Mark V. 15.

16 *And they also who* were present, and *had seen* all that passed from the beginning, gave them a particular account of [*it*,] and *told them* more largely than the swine-herds had done, *by what means the demoniac had been recovered; and also* told them *concerning the swine*, how they had been so strangely destroyed by the apparent agency of those evil spirits by which the men had before been possessed.

16

Mat. VIII. 34.

And behold, all the inhabitants of *the whole city* of Gadara,[1] as the rumour increased, *came out to meet Jesus; [and]* indeed *the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about*, flocked to see so wonderful a person: *and when they saw him, they* presently *began*, with all submission, *to entreat him that he would* please to *depart from them out of their coasts;* pretending that they, who had so great a number of Gentiles round them, were not fit to receive so great and holy a person: *for they* unreasonably looked on him as the author of the calamity which befel the swine, and *were seized with great fear*, lest he should send some farther judgments upon them, which they were sensible the great irregularities of their behaviour well deserved:[m] *and he*, by no means willing to obtrude his presence on those who were so insensible as not to desire it, *went into the ship* again, *and returned back* to the western shore of the sea.

Mark V. 18.

And when he was come into the ship, the demoniac, out of whom the demons were now de-

sessed with the devil, and had the Legion, [out of whom the devils were departed, sitting [at the feet of Jesus,] and clothed, and in his right mind; and they were afraid. [Luke VIII.—35.]

16 And they [also] that saw *it*, told them [by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed,] and also concerning the swine. [Luke VIII. 36.]

Mat. VIII. 34. And behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus [Luke, *and* the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about;] and when they saw him, they [began to pray him] that he would depart [Luke, from them] out of their coast; [Luke, for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.] [Mark V. 17. Luke VIII. 37.]

Mark V. 18. And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil, [out of whom the devils

[1] *The whole city* of Gadara.] Josephus describes it as a very considerable place. It was by the righteous judgment of God, the *first Jewish city* that fell into the hands of the Romans in the fatal war under Vespasian, and suffered great extremities. Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 7. (al. v. 3.) § 3, 4. See Wits. de Decem. Trib. cap. 8. § 2.

[m] Lest he should send some farther judgments upon them, &c.] Some have imagined, that they thought Christ a magician, and feared the effects of his art; but the cause assigned in the paraphrase seems to me much more decent, and, all things considered, more likely. They were probably a licentious sort of people, and might naturally, from what they saw, fear some farther chastisement from so holy a Prophet.

were departed,] prayed him that he might be with him. LUKE VIII. 38.—]

parted, fearing lest after this, (as it had been supposed of some, Mat. xii. 43—45, sect. lxiii.) he might be in danger of a relapse, and, dreading the terrors of his former condition, *entreated him that he might* be allowed to *continue with him*, to enjoy the farther benefit of his instructions. SECT. LXX. Mark V. 18.

19 Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not, but [sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house, *and*] go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord [God] hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee, [LUKE VIII. 38, 39.—]

Yet Jesus did not permit him to do it, *but sent him away, saying, Return to thine own house*, [*and*] *go to thy friends* and relations *at home; and* fail not particularly to *tell them how great things the Lord God* of Israel, whose messenger I am, *has* by his Almighty power *performed for thee; and* how graciously he *has had compassion on thee* in those deplorable circumstances which rendered thee a spectacle of horror to them, and all that saw thee. 19

20 And he departed, and began to publish [throughout the whole city, *and*] in Decapolis, how great things Jesus had done for him; and all men did marvel. [LUKE VIII.—39.]

And upon this *he went away, and began to publish through the whole city* of Gadara, in which he dwelt, [*and*] *in* all the neighbouring region of *Decapolis, what great* and wonderful *things Jesus had done for him: and all men were amazed* at so stupendous a miracle. 20

MAT. IX. 1. And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

And Jesus, *having entered into the ship*, departed thence as soon as the demoniac was dismissed: and, leaving those ungrateful people who had no greater value for his presence, *he passed over* the sea of Galilee, *and* shortly after *came to his own city* of Capernaum, where he had dwelt after his leaving Nazareth. (See Mat. iv. 13, p. 190.) Mat. IX. 1.

MARK V. 21. And [it came to pass, that] when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him; [*and* the people *gladly* received him; for they were all waiting for him:] and he was nigh unto the sea. [LUKE VIII. 40.]

And it came to pass, that when Jesus had passed over again in the ship to the other side of the lake, he was no sooner landed but *a great multitude gathered to him*, [*and*] *the people* most *gladly received him*;[n] *for they* expected his speedy return, and *were all* impatiently *waiting for him: and he continued* some time *on the sea-coast*, teaching, and working miracles. Mark V. 21.

IMPROVEMENT.

FROM the remarkable story which is here before us, we must surely see the most apparent reason to adore the good providence of God, which *restrains* the malignant *spirits* of hell from spreading those *desolations* among *beasts* and *men*, which would otherwise quickly turn the *earth* into a *wilderness*, or Mark V. 3, 13.

[n] *Gladly received him.*] This Grotius observes to be the meaning of the word (ἀπεδέξατο,) and in this sense it may likewise be understood, Acts xv. 4, and xviii. 27.

SECT. LXX. rather into a *chaos*. But what matter of joy is it to reflect, that all their fury and rage is under a *Divine control*, and that they cannot hurt even the meanest animal without permission from above!

Verse 12 The unhappy creature, whose state is here described in such lively colours, is an affecting emblem of those who are in a spiri-
4, 5 tual sense under the power of *Satan*. Thus do they *break asunder* the *bonds* of reason and gratitude, and sometimes of authority, and even of shame; and, thus *driven on* by the frenzy of their lusts and passions, they are so outrageous as to *injure others*, and to *wound themselves*. Human attempts to
15 moderate and reform them may be vain; but let us remember that the Almighty Saviour has a *voice* which can put this worst kind of *demons* to flight, and restore those that have been agitated by them to their *right mind*, so as to place them *at his feet* in holy *composure*, and in calm rational attention.

7 We see here *a legion of devils* trembling before the *Son of God*, confessing his superior *power*, howling as it were in their chains, and *entreating* the *delay* of their *torments*. And can human *pride* stand before him, and *rebellious mortals* triumph over him! Happy souls, that are *listed under his banners!* They shall share the *victories* of the great *Captain of their Salvation*, and *the God of peace shall bruise Satan under their feet shortly*. (Rom. xvi. 20.)

17 But oh, how stupid and how wretched were these *Gadarenes*, who preferred their swine to their *souls*, and *besought him to depart out of their coasts* whose presence was their *defence* and their *glory!* May Divine grace preserve us from a temper like theirs! And may those of us who have ourselves experienced the restoring power of *Christ* and his *gospel*, be en-
18, 20 gaged to *adhere* to our great *Benefactor*, and gratefully to *devote those powers* to his service which he has rescued from dishonour, mischief, and ruin!

SECT. LXXI.

Christ being entertained at Matthew's house, justifies his conversing with publicans and sinners; and vindicates his disciples for not keeping so many fasts as the Pharisees and the disciples of John did. Mat. IX. 10—17. Mark II. 15—22. Luke V. 29, *to the end.*

LUKE. V. 29.

SECT. LXXI. NOW, after Jesus had continued for a while on the sea-shore, (as was observed, Mark v. 21.) he entered into Capernaum: *and* Matthew, Luke V. 29. or *Levi*, who dwelt there, and who had some time since been called from his former office of

LUKE V. 29. AND Levi made him a great feast

SECT. LXXI.

Luke V. 29.

in his own house: [MARK, and it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat] [behold,] a great company of publicans [and sinners came, and] [MARK, sat also together with Jesus and his disciples,] and others; [MAT. for there were many, and they followed him.] [MAT. IX. 10. MARK II. 15.]

a publican, into the number of his stated attendants. (see sect. xlv. p. 260. 261,) desirous at once to shew his respects to Christ, and to give his former companions and acquaintance an opportunity of enjoying his instructive conversation, *made a great entertainment for him in his own house* [a] *and it came to pass that, as Jesus sat at table* there, *behold, a great number of the publicans, and* such as had the general character of *sinners*, being invited by Matthew, *came, and sat also at the table with Jesus and his disciples; and* several *others* at that time were present; *for there were many* of the character above described in Christ's train, (compare Mat. xi. 12 and. Luke xv. 1.) *and they followed him* with great eagerness, being charmed with the condescension with which he treated them, while many others shunned them with abhorrence.

30 But [when] their scribes and Pharisees [MARK, saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they] murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink, [MARK *and* how is it that [your Master] eat-

30 *But when* the more reserved and stricter sort of people in that place, and in particular *their scribes and Pharisees*, who pretended to be most exact and scrupulous in their conduct, *saw him* thus openly converse and *eat with publicans and sinners, they* were offended; and *murmured at his disciples* on that account, *saying, Why do you*, who should be examples to others, *eat and drink* in such scandalous company as this? [*and*] especially, *how is it that your Master*, who sets up for such an extraordinary Prophet, will allow himself to do it? for, while our traditions teach even the students, and much more the teachers of the law, to avoid all

[a] *A great entertainment for him in his own house.*] Nothing has perplexed the generality of harmonies more, and nothing has thrown the authors of them into greater inconsistency with the sacred writers, than their taking it for granted, that *Matthew made this entertainment* on the *very day* that *Christ called him* to attend upon him. The early harmonies of Tatian and Ammonius very justly separated them. (See Chemnit. Harm. cap. 43.) And, to the many convincing arguments which Mr. Jones has brought to prove that they ought to be separated, (which see in his Vindication of Matthew, p. 129—137.) I will add, that it seems to me very evident, they were not both on the same day, from this consideration, (so obvious, that I wonder none should have mentioned it:) so many things happened before the calling of Matthew, that the day must be far advanced, and there could not have been time to prepare a great feast, and invite a number of guests, at least till supper; (see sect. xlv.) and so many things happened after the feast, (see sect. lxxii.) that we cannot suppose them to have been crowded into the little remainder of the evening after supper; on which account it is certain, the feast was *after the day of his calling*, perhaps (as it seems by the intermediate stories, some months after, when he had made up his accounts, and regularly passed his business into other hands, which, to be sure, from a principle of justice, as well as prudence, he would take care to do.

SECT. LXXI.

commerce with such polluted and infamous persons, you see that he publicly *eats and drinks with* a considerable number of *publicans and sinners*, as if there were no scandal in being accounted their friend and companion.

Luke V. 30.

eth and drinketh] with publicans and sinners? [MAT. IX. 11. MARK II. 16.]

Mark II. 17.

And Jesus having heard that they were so offended at [*it*,] *answered them, saying, They that are in* perfect *health have no need* of the converse and advice *of the Physician, but those that are sick*, and therefore, out of compassion to their need of him, he visits and converses with them, though it cannot otherwise be agreeable to him to do it: and I act on the same principles; for *I am not come to call the righteous*, as you arrogantly imagine yourselves to be, *but* such poor *sinners* as these, *to repentance* and salvation. *But*, if you are offended at it, you may *go your way, and* would do well to set yourselves to *learn the meaning of that* instructive [*scripture*,] (Hos. vi. 6.) which I cited on a former occasion, (see Mat. xii. 7, p. 283.) and which you Pharisees are so ready to forget, "*I require mercy and not sacrifice.*" For, had you understood this saying, you would have seen that a ceremonial institution of Divine authority, and much more a mere human tradition, is to give way to the great duties of humanity and charity, even where men's bodies, and much more where their souls are concerned.

MARK II. 17. When Jesus heard it, he [LUKE, answering,] saith unto them, They that are whole, have no need of the physician, but they that are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. [MAT. IX. 12, 13. [LUKE V. 31, 32.]

Mat. IX. 13.

MAT. IX. 13.—But go ye, and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.

Mark II. 18.

Another occurrence which happened at the same time, *and* bore some resemblance to the former, was this. *The disciples of John* the Baptist, who had himself lived so austere a life, *and* was now in a calamitous state of confinement, as well as the disciples *of the Pharisees, used to fast* often; *and* the latter particularly twice a week; (compare Luke xviii. 12. sect. cxxix.) now, seeing Jesus at a publican's table on a festival occasion, surrounded with so many of his stated followers, some of *the disciples of John come and say unto him, Whence is it, that we the disciples of John, and also those of the Pharisees*, have *frequently* our days of solemn devotion, in which we *fast and make* many *prayers* and supplications to God for ourselves and the people? *whereas thy disciples fast not* at all, that we can perceive; *but*, on the contrary, *eat and drink* freely, though thou professest a

MARK II. 18. And the disciples of John, and of the Pharisees, used to fast: and [the disciples of John] come and say unto him, Why do [we] the disciples of John, and [LUKE, likewise *the disciples*] of the Pharisees fast [LUKE, often, and make prayers,] but thy disciples fast not [LUKE, but eat and drink?] [MAT. IX. 14. LUKE V. 33.]

righteousness superior to that of the scribes and Pharisees. (Mat. v. 20. sect. xxxviii.)

Mark II. 19.

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber [mourn *and*] fast, while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. [MAT. IX. 15.—LUKE V. 34.]

And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber, who are invited to attend the nuptial ceremony, with any decency *mourn* [*and*] *fast while the bridegroom is* yet continuing *with them? As long as they have* the pleasure of the presence and company of *the bridegroom among them, they cannot* reasonably be expected to *fast*, and every one would then account it to be out of season. Now my presence and converse renders this a kind of festival to my disciples: for, as John taught you but a little before his confinement, I am the great Bridegroom of my church;[b] you cannot therefore in reason expect I should command them to fast now, or that they should do it without such a command. *But*, I assure you, *the days will* 20 quickly *come, when*, as your master is separated from you, so even I, *the bridegroom, shall be taken away from them; and then they* must expect to undergo a great deal of hardship, and particularly *shall* be obliged frequently to *fast in those days;* as those whom I have mentioned might do if their festival was interrupted by the removal of their beloved friend whose joys they were sharing.[c] (Compare 1 Cor. iv. 11; 2 Cor. xi. 27.)

20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days. [MAT. IX. 15. LUKE V. 35.]

LUKE V. 36. And he spake also a parable unto them, No man putteth a piece [of new cloth into an old gar-

Luke V. 36.

Nor do I now think fit to lay such rigorous commands upon them, because prudence will require me at present to accommodate their trials to their strength. *And*, farther to illustrate this, *he spake also a parable*, or proposed another similitude *to them*, saying, *No man*, when he is mending clothes, *will* of choice *sew a piece of new cloth on an old garment;*[d] but rather

[b] I am the great bridegroom of my church.] Some have supposed there is in this similitude which Christ has used, a reference to the book of Canticles; and it is possible there may. (See Carpzov. Defence of the Hebrew Bible, p. 220, 221.) There is no doubt a reference to what John had lately said to his disciples so expressly on that head. John iii. 29, p. 159.

[c] If their festival was interrupted, &c.] Our Lord seems here with a beautiful propriety seldom observed, to suppose some hostile invasion to happen during the time of a nuptial feast, in which the bridegroom should either be slain or taken prisoner, which would damp all the joy of his friends, and change the scene into lamentation, fasting, and mourning.

[d] *New cloth on an old garment.*] The proper meaning of the words ῥάκους ἀγνάφου, by which *new cloth* is here expressed in the original, is cloth that has not passed through the fuller's hands, and which is consequently much harsher than what has been often washed and worn; and therefore, yielding less than that, will tear away the edges to which it is sewed.

SECT. LXXI.

Luke V. 36.

chooses what is a little worn: for *otherwise* it will be found that *both the new*, being stronger than the other, *makes a rent* in the edges of it when it comes to be stretched; *and the piece that was* [*taken*] *out of the new*, [*and*] *put in to* mend the former rent and *fill it up*, *agrees not* in colour and form *with the old*; and, being improperly put together, is of no service to the garment, [*but*] *takes away* more *from the old* than it adds to it; *and* thus *the rent is* increased and *made worse* than it was before.

ment;] if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new, [*and* put in to fill it up,] agreeth not with the old, [Mark, *but* taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.] [Mat. IX. 16. MARK II. 21.]

37 *And* again, on the same principles, *no* wise *man puts new wine into old bottles*, where the leather is weakened, and almost worn out; (compare Josh. ix. 4, 13, and Psal. cxix. 83.) for *else*, if he should, the fermentation of *the new wine will* soon *burst the bottles*, *and* so *the wine will be spilt*, *as well as the bottles destroyed:*

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and [MARK, the wine] be spilled; and the bottles shall perish: [MAT. IX. 17.—MARK II. 22.—]

38 *But new wine must be put into new bottles, and* by this means *both are preserved.* Now, as in the ordinary affairs of life, common sense dictates a regard to the mutual agreement and disagreement of things, it is necessary that I should attend to them, in my conduct towards my disciples; and, as they have not been inured to such severities as you and the Pharisees have long practised,[e] I do not therefore choose immediately to impose them, lest otherwise, to the great detriment of the world, they should be discouraged from attending upon me.

38 But new wine must be put into new bottles; and both are preserved. [Mat. IX. 17. MARK II.—22.]

39 And you cannot surely blame me for this, when you consider how difficult it is to alter the ways of living to which people have been accustomed even in less things than these now in question. As for instance, though some may be fond of new wine, while it is yet fermenting

This sense Albert has vindicated from exceptions not worth mentioning here. See Albert. Observ. p. 71—76.

[e] As you and the Pharisees have long practised.] That the Pharisees used to fast twice a week, is plain from Luke xviii. 12; and, no doubt, their young people were trained up to it. But it may be objected, that John's disciples were not so trained up, and consequently might have answered, that the disciples of Christ might as well, and as soon as they, have been brought under such severities and restraints. But the truth is, it was not divinely required of the one or the other. The character and circumstances of John laid them under some engagements not common to Christ's disciples, as he intimates; and, considering where, and how, the Baptist appeared, it is very probable many of his stated disciples were Essenes, who (as it is well known,) were a kind of hermit Jews, educated in great abstinence, and more frequent fastings, than any of the rest of them. (See Prideaux's Connection, Part. II p. 358.) And if so, nothing could have been more convincing than this reasoning.

39 No man also having drunk old *wine*, straightway desireth new; for he saith, The old is better.

in the vessel, yet those that have been used to drink another sort, will have no liking to it; *and no man who has* generally *drank* good *old* [*wine*] that is well ripened and refined, *will immediately choose* to drink *new*; *for he says*, *The old is better*, as being both more pleasant and more wholesome. Judge then how fit it is that I should not oblige my disciples to a new course of severities at once, but gradually form their characters to what the honour of their future profession and the usefulness of their lives may require. SECT. LXXI. Luke V. 39.

IMPROVEMENT.

THERE is no reason to wonder that *Matthew* should gladly embrace so proper an opportunity of introducing other *publicans* and *sinners* into the presence of that condescending *Saviour*, from whom, though he once was numbered among them, he had received *grace* and the *apostleship*. Let us with pleasure observe, how ready our blessed *Lord* was to receive them. Surely, whatever *offence* the proud *Pharisees* might take on such an occasion, *Jesus* will appear peculiarly amiable in such a circle as this. Compassionate Redeemer! thou didst, as the great *Physician of souls*, willingly converse with objects, that must have been most hateful to thy pure and holy nature! May we each of us have a due sense of the *malignity of sin*, that fatal *disease of the soul*, that we may with a becoming temper apply to *Christ* for a *cure!* May we also, like him, be willing to condescend to the *meanest* and *vilest*, if it may be the means of winning them over to true religion and happiness! ever preferring *mercy* to *sacrifice*, and choosing rather to govern ourselves by the dictates of a benevolent heart, than by the maxims of proud and censorious men. Luke V. 29. 30 31, 32 Mat. IX. 13.

Christ would not discourage his *disciples* by *over-rigorous institutions*; and it is unfit, that his religion should be burthened with them. He suits the duties of his people to their circumstances, and kindly proportions their work to their strength, with a tender regard to their weakness, till by degrees they may be fitted for the more difficult and humbling services. From his *example*, and the whole genius of his *gospel*, let us learn to make all proper *allowances* to those about us, that we may teach them, and train them up as *they are able to bear it*; not crushing them under any unnecessary load, nor denying them any indulgence, which true friendship will permit us to grant them; lest the good ways of God should be misrepresented, disgraced, and abandoned, through our imprudent, though well-meaning, *severity*: a caution to be peculiarly observed in our conduct towards *young persons*; and not to be forgotten with respect to those who, like the *disciples* here in question, are training up for the *ministerial office*. Luke V. 36—39.

SECT. LXXII.

Christ having in the way cured a woman by the touch of his garment, raises the daughter of Jairus from the dead, and afterwards performs some other miracles. Mat. IX. 18—34. Mark V. 22, *to the end.* Luke VIII. 41, *to the end.*

MAT. IX. 18.—

SECT. LXXII.

Mat. IX. 18.

WHILE he was speaking these things to them in Matthew's house,[a] *behold*, a very remarkable circumstance happened, which opened the way to one of the most signal miracles which Christ ever performed: for, though it was an uncommon thing for persons in an elevated rank of life to pay any regard to him, (see John vii. 48.) *there came a certain ruler of the synagogue* in that city of Capernaum, *whose name was Jairus; and when he* was entered into the room where Jesus was, and *saw him, he fell* down *at his feet* with the profoundest humility, *and worshipped him* in the presence of all the company, *and entreated him to come* immediately *to his house: For he had one only*

Luke VIII. 42.

daughter about twelve years old, and, having in that bloom of life been seized with a very dangerous distemper, *she* then *lay*, to all human

Mark V. 23.

appearance, *at the* very *point of death. And he* applied himself to Jesus with the utmost importunity, and *earnestly entreated him, saying, My* dear *little daughter is in the last extremity*, [*or*] *is* perhaps, as she was just expiring when I left her, *even now dead*;[b] [*I beseech*

MAT. IX. 18.—WHILE he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler [of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet] and worshipped him; [LUKE, and besought him, that he would come into his house:] [MARK V. 22.—LUKE VIII. 41.]

LUKE VIII. 42.—For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a-dying.

MARK V. 23. And he besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death, [*or* is even now dead;] I *pray thee*

[a] *While he was speaking these things to them* in Matthew's house.] These words fix the order of the section so plainly, that it is surprising Mr. Le Clerc should suppose that many events happened between the discourses recorded just above, and this application of Jairus to Christ, which St. Matthew so strongly connects. That critic is driven to the hard expedient of paraphrasing this clause thus: "While he discoursed with them on the "same subject, which he had been upon "the beginning of the year;" which is extremely unnatural, and, so far as I can recollect, quite unexampled in any author, ancient or modern. (See Le Clerc's Harmony, p. 197.) Had he thought of what is suggested above, sect. lxxi. note [a], p. 389, to prove Matthew's feast did not immediately follow his calling, he would have seen this criticism as unnecessary, as it is forced.

[b] *Or is* perhaps,—*even now dead.*] It is certain, from Mark's expression, ἐσχάτως ἔχει, which is literally rendered, *is in the last extremity*, as well as from the message relating to her death, which both he and Luke afterwards mention, that the young lady *was not dead* when her father came out; and consequently, that Matthew's phrase, ἄρτι ἐτελεύτησεν, (if not Luke's αὐτὴ ἀπέθνησκεν,) is to be taken in this extent. She had been given *over* when her father left her, and actually *was dead* before he could return; and he might therefore, when he applied to

come and lay thine hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live. [MAT. IX. —18.]

MAT. IX. 19. And Jesus arose, and followed him, and *so did* his disciples [LUKE, But as he went,] [much people followed him, and thronged him.] [MARK V. 24. LUKE VIII. —42.]

MARK V. 25. And [behold] a certain woman [which was diseased with] an issue of blood twelve years, [MAT. IX. 20. LUKE VIII. 43.]

26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all [her living] that she had [upon *them*, neither could be healed of any;] and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse; [LUKE VIII. —43.]

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched [LUKE, the border of] his garment: [MAT. IX. —20. LUKE VIII. 44.—]

thee] therefore *that thou wouldest* be pleased to *come, and lay thine hands on her, that she may recover; and* I doubt not, but, extreme as the case is, if thou wilt interpose in her behalf, *she shall live.* SECT. LXXII. MARK V. 23.

And Jesus arose and followed him, and [*so did*] *his disciples. Now, as he was going* to the ruler's house, *much people followed him* to see the event; *and* they *pressed upon him* in such a manner that he could not walk without some difficulty. MAT. IX. 19.

And behold, among those that were crowding about him there was *a certain* poor unhappy *woman who had* been long afflicted with a grievous disorder, having, *laboured under a flux of blood for* no less than *twelve years: And* she *had suffered a great deal from* the *many physicians* she had consulted, by disagreeable medicines and uneasy restraints, as well as by the great expence she had been at in applying to them: for indeed she had wasted all her substance, *and spent all that she had upon them:*[c] *but* her distemper was so inveterate, that she *could not be healed by any; and,* on the whole, she *was not at all the better* for their prescriptions, *but rather grew worse,* and weaker than before; And, *having heard of Jesus,* and the extraordinary cures he had wrought, being ashamed publicly to mention her case, she *came in the crowd behind* him, *and touched* the fringe which, according to the divine commandment, (Numb. xv. 38, and Deut. xxii. 12.) he wore upon *the* MARK V. 25. 26 27

Christ for his miraculous assistance, be ready to fear she was *by this time dead,* and might accordingly express himself in such a manner as to intimate his apprehension of it. Nor is it necessary, after all, that we should understand the phrase in Matthew as implying, she was *now* actually *dead;* for ἀρτι does not only signify what is *now come to pass,* but what is *just at hand,* (as may be seen in Phavorinus;) and so it may imply no more than that she was considered as just dead, and that there was no hope of her recovery but by a miracle.

[c] *Spent all that she had upon them.*] The ingenious Dr. Friend imagines, that he discovers something remarkable in the difference of those seemingly synonymous terms, which Mark and Luke make use of upon this occasion, and pleads that, δαπανησασα, in the former, signifies to *squander away;* whereas προσαναλωσασα, in the latter, signifies a more *gradual consumption* of her stock, by taking a little at a time from it; (see Dr. Friend's History of Physic, p. 37.) But, with submission to so great a name, I am not satisfied of the justice of the remark, since, on the one hand, δαπαναω is used in a better sense, 2 Cor. xii. 15. (and δαπανη, in Luke xiv. 28, is the *necessary expence* of building, as a prudent man would compute it;) and, on the other hand, αναλισκω plainly signifies to *destroy* or *consume,* however that destruction or consumption be accomplished. (See Luke ix. 54; and 2 Thess. ii. 8.) Nor does it seem altogether certain, that a tenderness in speaking of others of the faculty, is any sure diagnostic of a physician's writings.

SECT. LXXII.

border of his garment. For, as she knew that many had before been healed by touching him, (see Luke vi. 19, p. 296.) she had such a firm persuasion of the virtue that was in him, and of his power to cure her, that *she said within herself, If I may but touch* any part of *his clothes* 29 *I shall be recovered.*[d] *And immediately* on her having done it, *the fountain of her blood* that issued from her *was* at once staunched and *dried up; and she felt* such an unusual vigour and flow of spirits, that she plainly perceived *in her body that she was healed of that* wasting and dangerous *distemper* with which she had been chastised, for so long a time.[e]

Mark V. 28.

30 *And* upon this she would have retired unobserved: but *Jesus*, who had secretly performed the cure by the concurring efficacy of his will, *immediately knowing in himself that* healing *virtue was gone out of him*, thought fit on this occasion to shew that it had not escaped his notice,[f] as well as to illustrate and commend the faith of the patient; and therefore he immediately *turned* himself *about in the crowd, and*, looking round him, *said, Who* is it that *has* just now *touched my clothes? And all* the rest that were near him *denying it*,[g] *Peter, and his disciples that were* with *him, said unto him, Sir*,[h]

Luke VIII. 45.

28 For she said [within herself,] If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. [Mat. IX. 21.]

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. [Luke VIII. —44.]

30 And Jesus immediately knowing in himself, that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? [Luke VIII. 45.—]

Luke VIII. —45. When all denied, Peter, and [his disciples] that were with him, said [unto him,] Master, [thou

[d] *I shall be recovered.*] It is in the original σωθησομαι, *I shall be saved*: and there are many other places in which the word is used in the same sense; as to be sure it may with great propriety be applied to a rescue from any imminent danger or pressing calamity, especially in an extraordinary way. Compare Mark v. 23; vi. 56; Luke viii. 36; xvii. 19; xviii. 42; John xi. 12; and Acts iv. 9.

[e] *Of that distemper* with which she had been chastised, &c.] This being the plain meaning of μαστιγος here I did not think it necessary to render it *plague*, or *scourge*, as I have done in some other places.

[f] *To shew that it had not escaped his notice.*] And perhaps also to prevent a superstitious regard to any thing which might look like a relic of his, and from which weak people might without any warrant have expected benefit.

[g] *All denying it.*] The phrase not necessarily implying that the *woman* herself *denied it*, it would be unjust to suppose, she was base or foolish enough, immediately to deny what she had done; especially as the next moment we find her *owning it at large* with all possible candour.

[h] *Peter and his disciples—said unto him, Sir.*] Our English word Master, which we indifferently apply to almost any man to whom we speak, whether learned or unlearned, and which modern usage in common converse generally appropriates to inferiors, does by no means answer either to the Greek διδασκαλε, which signifies *teacher*, and would be most literally rendered doctor, (a word just of the same import in its original language) or to επισταλα, the word here used, which denotes at least a presiding *authority*. I have therefore here chose to render it *Sir*; and should think διδασκαλε might as well be rendered, *Rabbi*, as by any other word I can recollect. It is no wonder that titles of honour and respect, cannot be perfectly translated from one language into another, considering the diversity of ranks and of ceremonies in different nations.

seest the multitude throng thee, and press *thee*, and sayest thou, Who touched me? MARK V. 31.]

46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.

MARK V. 32. And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

LUKE VIII. 47. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she [knowing what was done in her,] came [fearing and] trembling, and falling down before him, she [told him all the truth, *and*] declared unto him before all the people, for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. [MARK V. 33.]

MAT. IX. 22. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, [unto her,] Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; [go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.] And the woman was made whole from that hour. [MARK V. 34. LUKE VIII. 48.]

MARK V. 35. While he yet spake, there came from the ruler

Thou seest that the multitude are crowding around thee, and press thee on every side, *and dost thou say, Who hast touched me?* One might rather ask, Who that has walked near thee has not done it? or which way is it possible, in such a crowd as this, to avoid it? *And Jesus said,* I am well aware that *somebody* here *has touched me*, not merely by accident, but on some important design: *for I perceive that* a healing *virtue* and efficacy *is gone out of me*, and am not ignorant of the particulars of the cure it has produced. SECT. LXXII. Luke VIII. 45. 46

And upon this *he looked round about* again, *to see her who had done this;* and directed his eye towards her with some particular regard. Mark V. 32.

And when the woman saw that she was not concealed from his all-penetrating view, *knowing* (as we before observed) *what* a marvellous work *was wrought in her, she came fearing and trembling*, lest he should be displeased with this surreptitious method she had taken; *and falling down before him, she* candidly *told him all the truth*; [*and*] *declared to him before all the people*, without any reserve, *for what reason she had* thus *touched him, and how she had been immediately healed* by that touch, of the grievous distemper she had been so many years afflicted with, which no force of medicines could remove or abate. Luke VIII. 47.

But Jesus, having thus *turned about and seen her*, instead of reproving her with the severity she expected, *said to her*, in a most gentle and condescending manner, *Daughter, take courage*, and be comforted, for I am not offended with thee: I know the sincerity of *thy faith*, in the regard which thou hast shewn to me, though mingled with some infirmity; and it *has made thee well*, and fitted thee for a cure thou couldest not otherwise have received: and therefore *go* home *in peace* and cheerfulness; for I dismiss thee with my blessing, (see note[1] on Luke vii. 50, p. 333.) *and* assure thee thou shalt continue to *be free from* any return of *thy distemper. And* accordingly *the woman was* perfectly *well from that hour*, and the malady never returned upon her as long as she lived. Mat. IX. 22.

In the mean time, *while he was yet speaking* to the woman, [*some*] messengers *came from* Mark V. 35.

SECT. LXXII. Mark V. 35. [*the house of*] Jairus, *the ruler of the synagogue*, whom we mentioned above: *and* they *said unto him*, *Thy daughter*, in whose behalf thou art applying to Jesus, *is* now actually *dead*, and consequently beyond the reach of prayer and of help: *why* therefore *dost thou trouble the* great *Master* in our Israel to come *any farther? Do not trouble him*[1] to come into the house of mourning, where he can only renew their sorrows by the lateness of his arrival there. 36 *But as soon as Jesus heard the word which was spoken* by these messengers, in which they related this melancholy news, *he says to the* afflicted *ruler of the synagogue*, Be not discouraged by these mournful tidings; and, notwithstanding they have brought thee such a sad account, *be not afraid*, as if there were no hope; *only believe* in the divine power and goodness operating by me, *and* I will answer for it that, desperate as thy daughter's case may now appear to a human eye, *she shall* still *be recovered*.

of the synagogue's *house*, *certain* which said [to him,] Thy daughter is dead: Why troublest thou the Master any further? [trouble him not.] [LUKE VIII. 49.]

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe, [and she shall be made whole.] [LUKE VIII. 50.]

Luke VIII. 51. *And when he came* to enter *into the ruler's house, he permitted none* of the company *to follow him* in, *except* his three most intimate friends, *Peter, and James, and John the brother of James*, whom he was pleased to distinguish on this, as he did afterwards on other occasions; *and* these with *the father and mother of the* deceased *maiden*, were the only persons whom he permitted to be eye-witnesses of the miracle he was about to perform. 52 *And*, as she was an only daughter, *all* their relations and friends who were present *wept* bitterly, *and lamented her: and*, as soon as Jesus was entered, *he saw the tumult, and the* crowd of *people who wept and cried out aloud*;[k] *and* there were also *the flute-*

LUKE VIII. 51. And when he came into the [ruler's] house, he suffered no man [MAR. to follow him, save Peter, and James and John the brother of James,] and the father and the mother of the maiden. [MAT. IX. 23.—MARK V. 37, 38.—]

52—And all wept and bewailed her: [MARK, and he seeth the tumult, [and the people] that wept [and wailed greatly.]

[1] *Why dost thou trouble the Master any farther? Do not trouble him.*] As several persons came, one might say, *Why dost thou trouble him?* as Mark has it; and another as Luke, *Do not trouble him.* I am sensible, the mention of both together is no ornament to the story: and perhaps it might have been as agreeable to our taste and manner, had both been expressed by saying, *Messengers came, who would have persuaded him not to have given Jesus the trouble of coming.* But I endeavour in this work, to give the reader as exact a view as possible, of the (very consistent) varieties with which different evangelists record the same facts; and it seems an end considerable enough, to excuse some little inelegancies of style which the execution of such a design must occasion. This remark is to be applied to many preceding and following passages.

[k] *Cried out aloud.*] A late version renders αλαλαζοντας, *howling*; which is indeed a sense that the original will bear, yet it is not always to be so translated:

SECT. LXXII.

[and the minstrels making a noise.] [MAT. IX.—23. MARK V.—38.]

MARK V. 39. And when he was come in, he saith unto them, [Give place, *and*] [LUKE, weep not;] Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead but sleepeth. [MAT. IX 24. LUKE VIII. —52.]

40 And they laughed him to scorn, [LUKE, knowing that she was dead.] But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.—[MAT. IX.—24, 25. —LUKE VIII. 53. 54.—]

41 And he took [her by the hand, and called, saying] unto her, Talitha cumi, which is, being interpreted Damsel, (I say unto thee,) arise. [LUKE VIII. 54.]

42—And straightway [LUKE, her spirit came again, and she] arose, and walked; for she was *of the age* of twelve years. [MAT. IX.—25. LUKE VIII. 55.—]

players, as usual on such occasions,[1] *making a* mournful *noise* with their musical instruments, to soothe the grief of the afflicted family. *And when he was come in* to the house, *he says to them, Retire*, and make way that I may see her; [*and*] *do not weep* in this abandoned and inconsolable manner: for *why do you lament, and make* a noise? and where is the need of all *this* hurry and *disturbance? The damsel*, whose departure you so bitterly bewail as if her loss was irretrievable, *is not* finally *dead, but is* fallen *asleep*; and if you have a little patience you shall see her awakened; (by which he intimated that this death should be but like a transient sleep; see John xi. 11, 13, § cxxxix.) *And they*, not 40 understanding his true meaning, were so rude that they *derided him*, as if the assertion had been altogether wild and ridiculous, well *knowing that she was* really and certainly *dead. But* he, too wise to enter into a clamorous debate with them, desired them to withdraw; and *when he had put them all out* of the way, *he takes the father and mother of the* deceased *maiden, and those* three disciples *that were with him, and enters in* to the chamber *where the damsel lay* dead. *And*, approaching the bed on which the corpse 41 was laid out, *he took hold of her hand: and*, to express his power over death itself, *called* with a loud voice, *saying to her*, (as if she had indeed been only asleep,) *Talitha cumi; which* Syriac expression, *being translated* into our language, *signifies Maiden, (I say unto thee,) rise up. And* he had no sooner spoke these 42 words, but *presently her spirit came back again* to animate the body which it had deserted, *and she* was so perfectly recovered that she *arose and walked*; which she was well able to do, *for*

Mark V. 39.

(see 1 Cor. xiii. 1. *Gr.*) And as the word howling is seldom used among us but in the case of brutes, or where great contempt is designed, I rather chose to drop a little of the emphasis of the word, than to shock a compassionate reader by so harsh an expression. To lift up the voice in weeping was common in the eastern countries: see Gen. xxi. 16; Judg. ii. 4: and 1 Sam xxx. 4.

[1] *The flute-players*, as usual on such occasions.] It is well known, that musical instruments were used by the Jews as well as the heathens, in their lamentations for the dead, to soothe the melancholy of surviving friends by soft and solemn notes. There were persons who made it their business to perform this office, and to sing to their music. (See Jer ix. 17; xlviii. 36; 2 Chron. xxxv. 25; and the notes of Drusius and Wolfius on this place.) Many have observed, that flutes were used especially on the death of children, and larger and louder instruments on the death of the adult.

SECT. LXXII.

she was twelve years old. And, as the life to which she was restored was not to be supported by a continued miracle, but must have food to nourish it in a natural way, *he ordered that something should be given her to eat*; which, on account of her late illness, she had not been able to do for some time.

Mark V. 43.

—43 And [he] commanded that something should be given her to eat. [Luke VIII.—55.]

Luke VIII. 56.

And her parents, and they [*all*] who were present, *were exceedingly astonished*, as well as filled with joy and gratitude: *but* [*Jesus*] behaved with his usual modesty,[m] and *strictly charged them, that they should tell no man* the particulars of *what was done*, nor make it their business to blaze abroad an event which would of itself become more public than he would have desired. *And* indeed it soon did so; for such numbers knew that she was really dead, and saw her alive again, that *the fame of it*, as of a most illustrious and extraordinary miracle, *went abroad into all that country*; and, being made the common subject of discourse, greatly increased the reputation he had before acquired by so long a series of wonders that he had wrought among them.

Luke VIII. 56. And her parents [and they *all* were] astonished with a great astonishment: but he charged them [straitly] that they should tell no man what was done. [Mark V.—42, 43.]

Mat. IX. 26.

Mat. IX. 26. And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

27 *And as Jesus passed on from thence* out of the ruler's house, *Two blind men*, who had heard of his being there, and waited for his coming out, *followed him*, as he went through the street, *crying out*, with great importunity, *and saying, O thou Son of David, have compassion upon us* in the miserable darkness that distresses us, and restore to us that precious sight

27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us.

28 which we have lost. *And* he took no notice of them as he walked on; but *when he was come into the house* to which he was going, *the* two *blind men*, by his permission, *came unto him: and Jesus says to them, Do you* indeed seriously *believe that I am able to do this? They say unto him, Yes, Lord*, we have not the least

28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

29 doubt of it. *Then he touched their eyes, and said*, Since you have that persuasion, *be it unto you according to* the sincerity of *your faith.*

29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith, be it unto you.

30 *And* immediately they both found that *their*

30 And their eyes

[m] With his usual modesty.] It is well worth the reader's observation, with what perfect decorum our Lord conducted himself on this occasion; and how entirely he appears master of himself, and superior to any views of human applause. Dr. Lardner has illustrated this, with a just and lively spirit of criticism. See his Answer to Woolston, p. 89.

were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.

31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

eyes were opened, and they saw strongly and distinctly. *And Jesus gave them a strict charge, that they* should not report it publicly abroad, and *should tell no man*[n] of the cure they had received. *But* they were so transported at what he had done for them, that *when they were gone out, they* were not able to refrain from publishing the miracle, but immediately began to *spread his fame over all that country.*

SECT. LXXII. Mat. IX. 31.

32 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man, possessed with a devil.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out the devils through the prince of the devils.

And when he had thus cured the two blind men, just *as they went out* of the house where Jesus was, *behold, they brought to him a dumb person*, who had been for some time deprived of his speech by being *possessed with a demon. And when* by the victorious word of Jesus *the demon was expelled, the* man who had so long been *dumb, spake* readily and distinctly; *and the multitudes were astonished, saying, it was never seen so*, even *in Israel* itself,[o] though it be a people among whom God has wrought such unparalleled wonders. *But the Pharisees* continued their senseless and blasphemous charge against him as a magician; and, not being able to deny facts that were so notorious, in order to prevent the effect which they might have upon the people, they *said, He* certainly *casts out* these inferior *demons by* a wicked confederacy with Beelzebub himself, *the prince of the demons*,[p] whose interest gains far more than it loses by dispossessions wrought by such a hand.

32 33 34

IMPROVEMENT.

WE have here a scene of complicated wonders worthy to be had in everlasting remembrance. Any *single story* of this kind might justly move our *admiration*; but when we are reading the

[n] *Jesus gave them a strict charge, that they should tell no man.*] Our version is more literal, but the sense is perfectly the same. I intended the variation only as a specimen of several of the like kind, which I think might be made in a manner which would better suit the genius of our language, though (perhaps through an excess of tenderness,) I have not often ventured to take even such little liberties as these. See Mr. Pope's note on Homer's Iliad, Vol. II. Book vi. ver. 665.

[o] *It was never seen so*, even *in Israel* itself.] This reflection was perfectly just; for no one of the prophets that we read of in the Old Testament, appears to have wrought so many beneficial miracles in his whole life, as our Lord did in this one afternoon.

[p] *He casts out demons by the prince of the demons.*] Our Lord had in an unanswerable manner confuted this base calumny before: (see sect. lxi. p. 336, & *seq.*) Yet they had the assurance to advance it again without any regard to that confutation. Such were the infidels of those days, as well as of these.

SECT. LXXII.

life of Christ, such a *constellation of miracles* rises, that the number renders us less sensible of the lustre and glory of each.

Mark V. 25. *& seq.* Ver. 28.

We may observe in the story of the *distempered woman* a mixture of *weakness* and of *faith*. She could not reasonably think to *steal a cure*, without the knowledge of him by whom it was wrought; or imagine a *charm* in the *garment* that *Christ* wore, which could produce so glorious an effect, independent on his agency and will. Yet she acted as if she had thought thus; and a compassionate *Redeemer* commended her *faith*, and ex-
34 cused her *infirmity*. Such candour should we exercise towards those in whom we find any thing truly valuable; *not despising the day of small things*, but ready to encourage and support the weak, and to commend whatever good we may discover in them.

Luke viii. 51. *& seq.*

We have already beheld *Christ* frequently giving *sight to the blind*, and *casting out evil spirits*: but we have here a *second instance* of his *power over death*, and behold one under its dominion *hearing the voice of the Son of God!* In how majestic, and yet in how gentle a manner does he address himself to this ad-
54 mirable work! *Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise.* And immediately she *heard* and *obeyed*. Thus shall he with equal ease, *call forth myriads of his saints*, who now seem *perished in the dust*:
52 and it may be said with regard to them also, in reference to that
55 day, *They are not dead, but sleep*. The *maiden*, of whom we here read, *arose* only to a *dying life*; a life which needed the support of *food*, and was in no respect more noble, or more secure, than that of other mortals: but we look for a *better resurrection*, in which all the infirmities of the body shall be left behind in the grave: and *there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying*. (Rev. xxi. 4.)

Mark V. 39.

In expectation of this, let us restrain *immoderate sorrow* when our pious friends are taken away: let us not make *too much ado* on the occasion, nor allow ourselves to be thrown into *a tumult of* passion, even when *our children* are stretched on the *bed of*
36 *death*; but *believing in Christ*, and governing ourselves by his precepts and maxims, let us in humble *resignation*, and submissive, though mournful *silence*, wait the issues of his providence and grace; since he knows how, as in *this instance*, to over-rule the calamities of our families to the good of our souls, and even to strengthen our *faith* by those exercises which might seem most likely to overthrow it.

SECT. LXXIII.

Christ renews his visit to Nazareth, where he is again rejected by the inhabitants; and thence takes a circuit through the neighbouring country. Mat. XIII. 54, *to the end.* IX. 35, *to the end.* Mark VI. 1—6.

MARK VI. 1.

SECT. LXXIII. Mark VI. 1.

Mark VI. 1. AND he went out from thence, and came into his own country, and his disciples follow him. [Mat. XIII. 54.—]

AND Jesus, when *he went out from thence,*[a] and was departed from Capernaum, where he had raised the daughter of Jairus *and* performed the other miracles which have just been mentioned, *came* again *into his own country* and town of Nazareth, and there renewed the gracious proclamations which they had several months before so ungratefully rejected; *and his disciples*, as usual *followed him* thither.

2 And when the sabbath-day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him*, were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man [this wisdom, and these mighty works?] and what wisdom *is* this, which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands? [Mat. XIII. —54.]

And when the sabbath was come, he began to 2 *teach in the synagogue*, as he had formerly done, though they had then attempted in a tumultuous manner to destroy him on the same occasion: (sect. xxxii. p. 188.) *And many* of his townsmen *hearing him, were struck with amazement, and said*, as several had done before,[b] *From whence hath this man*, whose birth and education we know, *this wisdom* which he manifests in these excellent discourses, *and* the power of performing *these mighty works? And what* supernatural *wisdom is this which is given to him, that even such* amazing *miracles* as these *are done by his hand? Is not this* Jesus *the* 3 man who but a while ago wrought among us as a *carpenter*,[c] and was *the son of* Joseph *the carpenter?* And *is not his mother*, who is *called Mary*, still living? *And* [*are not*] our neighbours, *James and Joses, and Simon and Judas*, whom we all know and daily converse with, *his*

3—Is not this the carpenter? [the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?] [Mat. XIII. 55.]

[a] *And he went out from thence.*] These words of Mark do plainly shew, that this visit to Nazareth is to be placed here: I say, to Nazareth, that being called *his own country*, by way of distinction from the rest of Galilee, and particularly from Capernaum, whence he now went out. See Luke iv. 23, p. 186.

[b] *And said*, as several had done before.] Luke plainly asserts that visit to Nazareth which he mentions, to have been before many occurrences which Mark tells us happened before this. It is evident therefore, they are *different visits*; nor is there any difficulty in supposing, that some now present, who perhaps had not heard him before, might repeat so natural a reflection as this. Compare Luke iv. 22, p. 186.

[c] Wrought among us as a *carpenter.*] The Jews tell us, *he made rakes and yokes.* Their canons required, that all parents should teach their children some trade; and probably the poverty of the family engaged Christ, while he was at home with his parents, to work at his. See Grotius on Mat. xiii. 55.

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brethren or near kinsmen?[d] *And are not all his sisters*, or kinswomen, *here* at Nazareth *with us?* From *whence then hath this man all these* extraordinary *things*[e] which furnish him for this illustrious character which he assumes superior to that of the greatest teachers and princes of our nation? *And they were offended in him*, and stumbled at the poverty of his education and family; so that they paid very little regard to what he preached.

Mat. XIII. 56. And his sisters, are they not all [here] with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? [Mark VI.—3.—]

57 ——And they were offended in him. [Mark VI.—3.]

But Jesus said unto them, This is indeed a most unreasonable treatment that I meet with from you: but it is obvious, even to a proverb, That *a prophet is no where less esteemed than in his own country, and among his* nearest *relations, even in his own family*;[f] who form their judgment of him by the mean appearance which they remember he made formerly in private life, and are regardless therefore of the excellence of his doctrine, and of the plainest evidences of his Divine authority and mission.

Mark VI. 4. Mark VI. 4. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. [Mat. XIII. —57.]

And this was verified in their conduct to him: for notwithstanding all that he had done in other places, they were so strongly prejudiced against him by the meanness of his outward circumstances, that they were openly regardless of the favour of his presence, and would not come to him for help; for which reason *he could not there* have any opportunity to exercise his power, or to *do any miracle* of note,[g] *excepting* only *that*

5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he

[d] *His brethren* or near kinsmen.] Whether they were the children of Joseph by a former marriage, or the children of some brother or sister of Joseph or Mary, is not material. Every one knows, that it was common with the Jews, to use the name of brethren in a larger sense, and to apply it to cousins and near kinsmen, as well as to those that were brethren in the proper sense of the word.

[e] *Whence hath this man all these* extraordinary *things?*] This, like many other things which have since been objected against the gospel of Christ, is as much the language of stupidity as of infidelity; for the meanness of Christ's education was a demonstration, that his teaching in so excellent a manner, must be the effect of some extraordinary Divine influence on his mind.

[f] *A prophet is no where less esteemed*, &c.] This is plainly the sense of the words, (though our translation is more literal:) for a prophet may be, and often is, afronted at a distance from home; as Christ himself found by frequent experience (Compare John iv. 44, p. 180, and Luke iv. 24, p. 187.—I have rendered the last words, και εν τη οικια αυτου, *even in his own family*; as και often has such a signification, and here seems most forcible if it be so interpreted.

[g] *He could not there do any miracle.*] We are not to understand these words so strictly, as if the power of Christ was here disarmed; but only that as they brought but few sick people to him for a cure, he did not judge it convenient to obtrude his miracles upon them, and so could not honourably and properly perform them. On the same principle it is, that faith in some cases, though not in all, is made the condition of receiving a cure: (compare Mark ix. 23; Mat. ix. 28; and Acts xiv. 9.) And Christ saw it proper to make it so here:

laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*; [*but* did not many mighty works, because of their unbelief.] [MAT. XIII. 58.]

6—And he marvelled because of their unbelief.

MAT. IX. 35. And Jesus went [round] about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people. [MARK VI.—6.]

36 But when he saw the multitude, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the labourers *are* few:

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

he laid his hands upon a few sick people, and SECT. *cured them; [but] he did not perform many* LXXIII. *mighty works* among them, *on account of their* *unbelief. And he wondered at* the continuance Mark VI. 6. of *their infidelity*, especially considering the many additional evidences they had received of his Divine power in his late signal operations.

And upon this *Jesus* left them,[h] and departing Mat. from Nazareth, *went round about* to *all the* neigh- IX. 35. bouring *cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the good news of the kingdom* which God was about to erect; *and* wherever he came, he gave abundant testimonials of the truth of his doctrine, by *healing every disease, and every malady among the people. And beholding the multitudes* which flock- 36 ed around him, *he was moved with* tender *compassion for them, because they were faint* with the fatigue of frequent journeyings, *and exposed* to continual danger,[i] *as sheep that had no shepherd* to feed them with spiritual food, or to watch for the safety and edification of their souls. *Then*, as he intended immediately after 37 this to send out his twelve apostles, *he says to* them and *his* other *disciples*, to quicken their devotion and zeal, *The harvest* of souls to be gathered in *is indeed great, but the* faithful *labourers* who assist in it *are few:* And *therefore* 38 let me urge you to *make your* importunate *supplications to the* great *Lord* and Master *of the harvest, that he would*, by the secret but powerful energy of his spirit on men's hearts, conquer their natural disinclination to this excellent work, and so *thrust forth* a sufficient number of ac-

as he well might, considering what they must undoubtedly have heard of him from other places, and what they had confessed themselves but just before, of mighty works being wrought by his hands: which shews indeed, that their unbelief did not so much consist in a doubt of his miraculous power, as of his divine mission, which to any unprejudiced person's mind, that power so abundantly proved. In this view therefore it is hard to say, how he could with honour and decency, have lavished away his favours on so unworthy a people.

[h] *Jesus* left them.] So far as we can learn from the gospel history, he never after this returned any more to Nazareth.

[i] *Faint and exposed.*] Though the learned Elsner has taken a great deal of pains to prove, in his note on this text, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 49, 50.) that ἐκλελυμένοι signifies *scattered* or *wandering*; yet I still chuse to render it, *they were faint*; which sense of the word is sufficiently vindicated by Wolfius, (in loc.) and Albert, (Observ. p. 76, 77.) and is established by the use of it in other places of the New Testament. Compare Mat. xv. 32; Mark viii. 3; Gal. vi. 9; and Heb. xii. 3, 5.—But I think Elsner has advanced enough to justify the rendering of ἐρριμμένοι, exposed to every invading danger, as sheep are, when thrown up or abandoned by their shepherd.

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tive and indefatigable *labourers into his harvest*,[k] by whom it may successfully be carried on, to his own greater glory, and the edification and salvation of souls.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mark VI. 1. SINCE the blessed *Jesus* vouchsafed to *renew his visit* to *Nazareth*, where they had attempted to murder him on his first preaching among them, let us *not be weary of well-doing*, nor refuse to *renew our attempts* on the most obstinate sinners, where the interest of their immortal souls are concerned.

2 But though they were *astonished* at *his wisdom*, and could not but allow *the mighty works* that he had wrought; yet these ungrateful creatures went on to reject him, and in so doing were *condemned out of their own mouth*: nor can we be at any loss for instances of those who in later ages have fallen under the *like condemnation*.

3 He is spoken of as *the carpenter*; which intimates that he once wrought at that mean employment. What amazing condescension was this in the *Son of God*, and the *Heir of all things*, *by whom also the worlds were made!* (Heb. i. 2.) Yet surely while the *hands of Christ* were employed in these daily labours, *his soul* was rising in holy contemplations and devout affections. So may we intermingle *pious meditations* with our *secular cares*, and have *our conversation in heaven*, while our *dwelling* is *on earth!*

5 How much did these *Nazarenes* lose by their obstinate prejudices against *Jesus!* How many *diseased bodies* might have been cured, how many *lost souls* might have been recovered and saved, had they given him a better reception! May Divine Grace deliver us from that *unbelief*, which does as it were *disarm Christ himself*, and render him *a savour of death*, rather than *of life*, to our souls!

Mat. IX. 35. Still he continued his gracious labours, and, when *rejected in one city*, went and *preached in another*; still surrounded with a *crowd* of admirers, whom he viewed with *tender regard*. Let 36 us, *ministers*, learn of him tenderly to *pity* those who are *faint and exposed* to danger, and are *as sheep having no shepherd*. The extreme *necessities* of his *churches* in many places are but 37 too apparent: let us earnestly *pray*, that *God* would behold them with *compassion*; that he would graciously provide for 38 their instruction, and would *thrust forth* such *labourers* among them as may be diligent and faithful in their work, and prove the happy instruments of *gathering in fruit to everlasting life*. (John iv. 36.)

[k] *Thrust forth labourers into his harvest.*] The word ἐκβαλῃ so plainly imports this, that I am sorry I retained our less emphatical translation in the first edition. Whoever considers the immense difficulties and oppositions with which every minister of Christ's kingdom was sure to encounter in those early days of it, will see the necessity of some unusual energy and impulse on the mind to lead any to undertake it.

SECT. LXXIV.

Our Lord sends forth his apostles with a commission, and gives them instructions to preach the gospel. Mat. X. 1—15. Mark VI. 7—11. Luke IX. 1—5.

MAT. X. 1.

SECT. LXXIV. Mat. X. 1.

MAT. X. 1. AND when he had called [LUKE, together] unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power [LUKE, and authority over all devils *or*] unclean spirits to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease. [MARK VI. 7.—LUKE IX. 1.]

AND Jesus *having called his twelve disciples together*,[a] whom (it has been observed before, Luke vi. 13. p. 293.) he had chosen some time since to be his constant followers and attendants, and who were named apostles from their mission; *he* endowed them with the gift of working miracles, and *gave them power and authority over all* kinds of *demons*, [*or*] *unclean spirits, to cast them out* of those unhappy persons whom they had possessed, *and to cure every distemper, and every malady*, how malignant and dangerous soever.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother;

2 *Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first* of them, who was one of the most early followers of Christ, and the first that was called to a stated attendance upon him (p. 192), and whose remarkable zeal and piety rendered him a kind of leader among them, was *Simon, who is* also *called Peter*,[b] as Christ had honoured him with that sirname (see John i. 42, p. 130.) *and Andrew his brother*, who was called the same day with him: *James the* [*son*] *of Zebedee* the fisherman, *and John his brother*, that beloved disciple; who were also called at the same time with the two former, as they were fishing at the sea of Galilee. (p. 193.)

3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James *the son* of Alpheus, and Lebbeus, whose sirname was Thaddeus;

3 *Philip* of Bethsaida, *and Bartholomew: Thomas* called Didymus; *and Matthew*, who had been *the publican: James* [*the son*] *of Alpheus*; *and Lebbeus, whose sirname was Thaddeus*, and who was also called Judas or Jude, the brother of

[a] *Having called his twelve disciples together.*] There can be no room to doubt that this is the *proper place* of the *mission of the apostles* considering its connection with the preceding stories in all the evangelists that mention it.

[b] *he first, Simon who is called, Peter.*] The reasons assigned in the paraphrase are so apparently sufficient to account for Peter's being named *first*, that it is strange any should have attempted to prove from this text the *authority of Peter* over his brethren, when we never find it declared by Christ, or claimed by Peter, or owned by any of the rest of the apostles, but rather find so many scriptures which appear to look a contrary way. See Mat. xxiii. 8—12, Acts xv. 13, *&c. seq.* 2 Cor. xii. 11; and Gal. ii. 11.

SECT. LXXIV. Mat. X. 4.

James: *Simon the Canaanite*, a native of Cana;[c] *and Judas Iscariot*, or a man of Carioth, that wicked and miserable creature, *who* afterwards *even betrayed him*, and then laid violent hands on himself.

4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 *These twelve* disciples *Jesus sent forth by two and two* in pairs,[d] that they might be agreeable companions and assistants to each other in their work; *and* he *commanded them* to go into those places which he himself purposed shortly to visit;[e] and *to preach* there the gospel of *the kingdom of God*, or to proclaim the joyful tidings of the approaching kingdom of the Messiah; *and*, in confirmation of it, *to heal the sick*, and exert the other miraculous powers which he had given them. And upon this occasion he made an excellent discourse to them, *saying*, In this circuit which I now send you, *do not go into the way of the Gentiles*; for the glad tidings of the gospel are not yet sent to them; *nor enter into [any] city of the Samaritans*, if you should be obliged to pass through their country; though I once did it, and preached among them with considerable success. (See John iv. 40, 41, sect. xxx.) *But* my message is chiefly to be delivered to the Jews; (compare Mat. xv. 24. and Rom. xv. 8.) and therefore *go ye rather to* them, *the* poor lost *sheep of the house of Israel*, who are generally wandering in the paths of error and sin; yet they shall receive this farther token of my regard, that the first notices of my kingdom shall be sent to them. *And as ye*

5. These twelve Jesus sent forth [by two and two] and commanded them [Luke, to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick,] saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not: [Mark VI.—7. Luke IX. 2.]

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

[c] *Simon the Canaanite*, a native of Cana.] The reader may see an illustration of this title, and that of Lebbeus, sect. lii. p. 295, notes [f] and [g].

[d] *By two and two.*] It is obvious this would conduce to the *confirming* of their *testimony* as in *the mouth of two witnesses every word is established*, (Mat. xviii. 16.) as well as make their mission much more comfortable than if each had been sent alone. Mr. Fleming has taken pains to shew, that there was great wisdom in joining them together in such pairs as are here intimated, on account of the resemblance or contrast of their characters. The discourse is very ingenious; but the memoirs of some of the apostles are so short, that much of it is uncertain conjecture, rather than convincing argument. See Fleming's Christol. Vol. II. p. 167, *& seq.*

[e] Which he himself purposed shortly to visit.] Our Lord was now entering at least on the third year of his ministry, and therefore purposed to take a larger tour than he had formerly done; concluding, that the fame of so many miracles would make way for his being heard with greater regard than before. (Compare sect. xxxi. p. 180. and sect. xxxvi. p. 205.) The time they had spent with him in an immediate attendance on his ministry, since their first call to the work, would no doubt conduce much to their *fitness* for it; and the *notice* taken of them by multitudes who had often seen them near Jesus would promote their *acceptance* in it. See Mark iii. 13, 14. p. 294.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give.

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go from one place to another, wherever you come, *proclaim* this good news, *saying*, with that ardour and zeal which becomes my heralds,[f] *The* long expected *kingdom of heaven is approaching*; prepare yourselves therefore to receive the blessings of it. And that a declaration of so great importance may not want suitable testimonials, and the meanness of your personal appearance may not render the truth of it suspected, (as any proper occasion offers), *heal the sick*, *cleanse the lepers*, yea, *raise the dead*,[g] and *cast out demons*: for such a power I have given to you, and see that you exert it in a manner most honourable to yourselves and me; [*and as*] *you have received* it *freely*, *freely give* unto others the assistance which it enables you to impart, and scorn the thought of making any gain of those for whom these works of mercy and power are performed.

Mat. X. 7.

8

Mark VI. 8. And he commanded them, that they should take nothing for *their* journey, save a staff only; [Luke, and he said unto them,] Provide no bread, no money, [neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses;] [Mat. X. 9. Luke IX. 3—] Mat. X. 10. Nor

And he commanded them, that they should take nothing for [*their*] *journey*, *except only a staff*, which they had in their hands:[h] *and*, to prevent any solicitude as to the means of their support, *he said unto them*, Disburden yourselves of all anxious cares on this occasion, and *provide neither bread*, or any other kind of food, for your subsistence, *nor money* to purchase provisions: *neither gold*, *nor silver*, *nor brass* coin, *in your purses*.[i] *Nor* even take so much

Mark VI. 8.

Mat. X. 10.

[f] *Proclaim*—with that ardour and zeal which becomes my heralds.] This is the proper import of the word κηρυσσειν, which is derived from κηρυξ, *a herald*. Probably they were to make this proclamation with a loud voice as they passed through the streets of the towns they went to; as Jonah delivered his message to Nineveh. See Jonah iii. 4.

[g] *Raise the dead.*] Though many ancient copies have not this clause, and though we do not find that the apostles exerted any *such power* whilst Christ lived; yet since the oldest versions have it, and it is certainly much easier to *drop* than to *insert* a clause by accident, I chuse, with Dr. Whitby, to retain it, though there are great authorities on the other side. It is to me very evident, that some passages in this discourse refer to events which did not immediately take place. See Mat. x. 18, 21, 23, in the next section.

[h] *Except only a staff*, which they had in their hands.] There is no difficulty thus to reconcile this clause with what is said in Matthew, (ver. 10.) that they should *not provide a staff* (as it is there expressed in the original, μηδε ραβδον); for many *copies* read it in the *plural number*, μηδε ραβδους, *nor yet staves*; which reading is confirmed by Luke, (ver. 3.) where it is so expressed. Nor is there any need we should suppose, with Heinsius, that η is put for ουτε here in Mark, as if they were commanded to *take nothing* with them, *not even so much as a staff*. For all that Christ intended was, that they should so entirely depend upon the providence of God, that they should set out with nothing but the staff in their hands; and that, however common it might be for those who were to travel a long way to be provided with two staves as well as with two coats, they need not be solicitous to have another ready in case one should fail.

[i] *In your purses.*] The original word, ζωναις, expresses the custom they had of

SECT. LXXIV. Mat. X. 10.

as *a scrip* to carry any manner of provisions *for* [*your*] *journey; nor* think it needful you should have *two coats apiece*, or any change of raiment; *nor* what might seem more necessary still, even another pair of *shoes*, or any stronger than ordinary, *but be shod* just as you are *with sandals*;[k] *nor yet* take any *staves*, but only those that you are used to walk with. *For the labourer is* surely *worthy of his food:* and as you may freely accept the necessary supplies of life when offered by those to whom you preach, so you may cheerfully trust the Providence of God to take care of you while engaged in so good a cause; and he would rather support you by a miracle, than suffer you to want what shall be necessary for your sustenance.[l]

scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats [Luke, apiece,] neither shoes, [but be shod with sandals,] nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat—[Mark VI. 9. Luke, IX.—3.]

11 *And he* farther *said unto them*, Go forth therefore with a holy alacrity; and *into whatever city or village you enter*, make it your first business to *enquire who in it is* of a *worthy* character for hospitality and piety; for I would not have you endanger your own reputation, by taking up your lodging in any disreputable family: *And whatever house you* thus *enter into, continue there till you leave the place;* that you may not seem to have too great a regard to the little circumstances of domestic accommodation, which it is beneath your character as my ministers to be very solicitous about.

11 And [he said unto them,] Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and [Luke, whatsoever house ye enter into,] there abide, [till ye depart from that place.]—[Mark VI. 10. Luke IX. 4.]

12 *And*, as an early intimation of the friendly intention of your visit, *when you* first *enter into any family, salute it* in a courteous and religious manner, saying, according to the usual custom of friends when they enter the dwellings of each other, "Peace be upon this house."[m]

12 And when ye come into an house, salute it:

carrying money in a kind of fob-pocket, or purse, which was made in the duplicature of their girdles. See Dr. Shaw's Travels p. 292.

[k] *Nor shoes, but be shod with sandals.*] I apprehend the word ὑποδηματα, *shoes*, must here signify a kind of *short boots*, which they used in long journeys, that covered the whole foot and small of the leg; whereas their *sandals* were pieces of strong *leather*, or *wood*, tied under the sole of the foot by strings, and something resembling modern clogs. See Calmet's Dictionary, Vol. II. p. 615, on the word sandals; and Lightfoot's Hor. Heb. on Mat. x. 10.

[l] He would rather support you by a miracle, &c.] Our Lord intended this mission in part, as an intimation into their apostolic work; and it was, no doubt, an encouragement to them during all the remainder of life, to recollect the singular care which Providence now took of them, though they had abandoned their families, and with them the means of subsistence, and went out wholly unfurnished for such an expedition. In this view Christ leads them to recollect it, Luke xxii. 35, sect. clxxiii.

[m] Peace be upon this house.] This custom of saluting friends after this manner is still retained among the Turks and

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Mat. X. 13.

13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy let your peace return to you.

And if the family be worthy the Divine regard, *your* good wishes for its *peace* and prosperity *shall come upon it*,[n] and I will make the blessing that you pronounce effectual: *but if it be not worthy*, even then *your* kind wishes for its *peace* and happiness shall not be lost, but *shall return unto you* in blessings on your own heads, as being the genuine workings of that pious and benevolent temper which God always approves and rewards.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words; when ye depart out of that house, or city, shake off the [LUKE, very] dust of your feet, [for a testimony against them.] [MARK VI. 11.—LUKE IX. 5.]

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor in 14 an obedient manner *hearken to your words;* as for such unhappy persons, *when you come out of that house or city* in which they dwell, *shake off the very dust of your feet, as a testimony against them*,[o] or as a token that you look upon them as devoted by God to destruction, and therefore desire to separate yourselves entirely from them, that you may not be partakers of their plagues. (Compare Rev. xviii. 4, and Acts xviii. 6.)

15 Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city. [MARK VI. 11.]

And indeed you have reason to do it; for 15 *verily I say unto you*, That whatever profession they may make of their regard to the true God, and however they may continue to boast of their national privileges, *it shall be more tolerable* not only for the generality of Gentile sinners, *in the day of* final *judgment*, but even *for* the natives of *the land of Sodom and Gomorrah*, those monsters of unnatural wickedness who were consumed with fire and brimstone from heaven, *than for* the inhabitants of *that* wretched *city*; for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah never sinned against such extraordinary light and such singular favours as they.

other eastern nations; and I thought it not improper to express it for the illustration of what follows.

[n] *Your peace shall come upon it.*] This is one of those many passages in which (as the Grammarians speak) the imperative is put for the future; that is, *Let it come*, for *it shall come*: (so 1 Cor. xvi. 22.) And perhaps many seeming imprecations in the Old Testament may most easily be accounted for, by such an explication as prophetic predictions of what should happen to the enemies of God and his people.

[o] *Shake off the very dust of your feet*, &c.] The Jews thought there was something of so peculiar an *holiness* in the *land of Israel*, that when they came home from any heathen country, they stopped at its borders, and wiped the dust of it from their shoes, that the sacred inheritance might not be polluted with it; nor would they permit herbs to be brought to them from their neighbours, lest they should bring any of the dust of their land upon them. So that the action enjoined to the apostles here was a lively intimation that when the Jews had rejected the gospel, they were no longer to be regarded as the people of God, but were on a level with heathens and idolaters. See Mr. Fleming's Christol. Vol. II. p. 160.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. LXXIV. WHAT abundant reason is there for humble thankfulness, that the *ambassadors of Christ* were thus *sent forth to preach the gospel*, and that at length their *number* was increased, and their *commission* enlarged; so that instead of their being thus confined to the *lost sheep of the house of Israel*, *their* instructive *line is gone out through all the earth, and their words* have resounded even *to the end of the world:* (Psal. xix. 4.) May the purport of their message be seriously attended to! since it will so certainly be *a savour of life* or *of death*, of eternal *salvation*, or aggravated *condemnation* and ruin.

Mat. X. 1. 5, 6

15 Let us tremble to think, that *it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment*, than for *those* by whom the *gospel is rejected:* and let us earnestly pray, that Divine grace may enable us to *receive it in the love of it*, and to obey *the truth, that we may be saved;* (2 Thess. ii. 10.)

They who have the honour in this respect to succeed the *apostles* as *ministers* of this *gospel*, may learn most useful instructions from this discourse of our *Divine Master*. Let them speak 12, 13 and act as the *messengers of peace*, and the friends of mankind, who cordially wish well to all around them; and gratefully ac- 10 knowledge the kindness which, as faithful *labourers*, they have justly *deserved*. Let them shew a true greatness of mind, in an apparent superiority to *temporal interest*, and present gratifications; *easy* in whatever accommodations they find where *Providence* leads them; and forgetting themselves to remember their *Master*, and the *souls* he has committed to their care.

Let them faithfully warn all around them, of the importance of their *eternal concerns*, and of the unutterable danger of *receiving the grace of God in vain*, that, *whether men will hear or* 9, &c. *forbear*, they may be *clean from their blood*. And, while we preserve such a temper and conduct, we may cheerfully hope, that *God will be with us* in the way that we go, and, how *precarious* soever our *circumstances* may seem, will give us *food to eat and raiment to put on*. May we all have *this token for good*, that God will take care of *our interests*; even the *consciousness* of our being faithfully engaged to promote his glory, and our joyful *readiness* to *spend and be spent* for the service of souls! (2 Cor. xii. 15.)

SECT. LXXV.

Our Lord faithfully warns his apostles of the danger and opposition they might expect to encounter in his service. Mat. X. 16—28.

MAT. X. 16.

Mat. X. 16. BEHOLD, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

WHEN our Lord had thus instructed his apostles as to their behaviour and office in general, he went on faithfully to lay before them the difficulties and trials they were to expect in the execution of it; and added, *Behold, I send you out as* so many innocent and defenceless *sheep, in the midst of* a whole multitude of fierce and ravenous *wolves*,[a] who will not fail to watch every opportunity to attack and even devour you: *be ye therefore* continually on your guard against them, and labour to approve yourselves *prudent as serpents*, in avoiding unnecessary dangers;[b] but far from imitating the malignity and revengeful nature of that animal, maintain at all times a holy simplicity of soul, *and* be *harmless* and inoffensive *as doves*, those gentle creatures, who are innocent and loving to a proverb. *But be upon your guard against* the *men* of the world with whom you converse, that you do not by any inadvertency give them advantage against you; *for they will* seek occasions of mischief, and *betray you to the councils*, and deliver you up to the sanhedrim and other inferior courts of judicature, *and will* also *scourge you in their synagogues*.[c] *And*, in some cases, the prosecution shall be carried yet farther; for *you shall be brought before governors and kings on my account*,[d] *for a witness to them, and to the heathen*, as this will give you an opportuni-

SECT. LXXV. Mat. X. 16.

17 But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues:

17

18 And ye shall be brought before governor and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

18

[a] *As sheep in the midst of wolves.*] So frankly did our Lord warn his apostles of the hardships and dangers with which they should be surrounded. Nothing could be more fair; nothing more generous.

[b] *Prudent as serpents.*] Pliny has given us some very remarkable stories of the sagacity of serpents, some of which, I confess, have the air of fables: (see Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vii. cap. 23, 27.) But it is certain, there is a peculiar vivacity in their eyes; so that to be as sharp-sighted as a serpent, was a proverb both among the Greeks and Romans. See Erasm. Adag. p. 580.

[c] *Scourge you in their synagogues.*] Compare Mat. xxiii. 34, and Acts xxii. 19. This is a sort of discipline, which has long since been used in their synagogues, where they keep their courts; and which the wretched Acosta tells us he himself underwent. See cost. de Vit. Hum. ad fin; Limborch. Coll. p. 349; Wits. Vit. Pauli, § 1, § 19—21; and Vitring. de Synagog. Vet. lib. iii. par. 1, cap. 11.

[d] *Before governors and kings*, &c.] Accordingly the apostles were several of them obliged to appear before princes, and were severely prosecuted by their malicious enemies before Herod, Agrippa, Felix, Festus, Nero, Domitian, &c. as we learn from sacred or profane history.

SECT. LXXV.

ty of testifying my gospel more solemnly both to Jews and Gentiles.

Mat. X. 19.

But when they shall accuse you with the utmost virulence, and *deliver you up* to appear before such high personages, *be not* anxiously *solicitous* about your defence there, *how* you shall answer for yourselves, *or what you shall speak:* but cheerfully throw yourselves upon the Divine assistance which shall be abundantly sufficient for you; *for it shall be given you in that very hour what you shall speak;* proper thoughts and words shall be suggested to you, and your minds shall be maintained in that composure and dignity which is necessary for the honour of the cause you assert.[e] *For* indeed, when you appear on these occasions, and are called to answer for yourselves, *it is not* [*so much*] *you that speak, as the spirit of your Father that speaketh in you* in defence of that gospel which it is his peculiar office to promote in the world.

19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

Nevertheless, all the wisdom and justice of your apologies, though divinely inspired, will not disarm the malice of your unreasonable enemies, which shall prevail to such a degree, as even *to* triumph over natural affection, *and* break asunder the strictest bonds of social life: for *one brother shall betray another*, not only to some slighter punishment, but even *to* a violent and tormenting *death; and the father* shall thus become the murderer, instead of the guardian and protector of *the son*; *and children*, on the other hand, forgetting all the obligations of filial duty and affection, *shall rise up* as witnesses *against their* own *parents, and cause them to be put to death.* *And you*, my apostles, notwithstanding all the humanity of your character, and the benevolent design of your office, *shall be* the objects of such general aversion, censure, and persecution, that you shall in a manner be *hated of all men for the sake of my name;*[f] when your calling yourselves by it shall

21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against *their* parents, and cause them to be put to death.

22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but

[e] For the honour of the cause you assert.] Persons of so low an education as the apostles generally were, might have been much terrified at the thought of appearing before such great personages; and might have feared lest, in the hurry of their spirits, they should have been betrayed into any impropriety of language or behaviour, by which the cause of the gospel might have suffered: so that nothing could have been more suitable, than the promise which our Lord here makes them, which was sufficient to prevent a thousand anxious apprehensions.

[f] *You shall be hated of all men for the*

he that endureth to the end, shall be saved.

appear, to your enemies themselves, the only crime chargeable upon you: *but* be not discouraged at these trials; for *he that* courageously *endures to the end, shall* on the whole *be saved*; and whatever extremities he may suffer in this world, God will not only deliver him from the destruction that shall come upon the wicked, but will amply repay his fidelity in the next. (Compare Mat. xxiv. 13, and Rev. ii. 10.)

SECT. LXXV. Mat. X. 22.

23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

But I say not this to encourage you to rush upon martyrdom before you have a plain and lawful call to it: for, on the other hand, it will rather be your duty to prolong such useful lives to the utmost limits you lawfully may, and *when they persecute you in one city*, to *flee to another*: and though this may contract the time of your abode in each, be not discouraged at that, which may, on the whole, be no inconvenience: *for verily I say unto you, You shall not* have had time to *finish* [*your progress through*] all *the cities of Israel*, and to preach the gospel in every place, *until the Son of man shall come*§ in a yet more awful appearance, to fulfil your prediction concerning the manifestation of his kingdom, and to take vengeance on your cruel persecutors. 23

24 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord:

And as for the unkind usage I have warned you to expect, you have no reason to be surprised at it; for, as I have formerly observed, (Luke vi. 40, sect. liv.) *The disciple is not above his teacher, nor the servant above his lord*: 24

25 It is enough for the disciple, that he be as his master, and the servant as

It is abundantly *sufficient, if the disciple be as his teacher, and the servant as his lord*; and in such a circumstance the disciple and the servant 25

sake of my name.] They who believed the testimony of the apostles; as multitudes did could not but ardently love them, as their fathers in Christ: (see Gal. iv. 15.) This therefore is plainly one of those many scriptures, in which the universal term *all* is to be taken with great *restrictions*. See John xii. 32; Phil. ii. 21; and Rom. v. 18.—As there seems in this text a peculiar emphasis in the phrase, *for the sake of my name*, I chuse in this edition to render it more literal than in the first; though (as I had there observed,) it is apparent, that *the name* of a person is sometimes put for *the person* himself. See note ‖ on John ii. 23, § xxiv.

§ *Until the Son of man shall come.*] I do not find that the apostles met with any persecution in this first progress, from which they soon returned to Christ, and told him all that they had done; (see Mark vi. 30, and Luke ix. 10, § lxxviii.) and therefore, as well as for many other reasons, I cannot understand *the coming of the Son of man* to signify his overtaking them in this journey before they came to the end of it: nor does it appear natural, with Dr. Sykes (in his Essay on the Truth of Christianity, p. 85, & seq.) to refer it to *Christ's coming to judgment*. It is rather, as Mr. Whiston observes, (in his discourse of Prophecy, p. 65.) to be explained of their being driven out of Judea by persecutions so that they had not time to visit all the parts of it before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, which is often called *the coming of the Son of man*. See Mat. xxiv. 27, 37, 39, 44; and Luke xviii. 8.

SECT. LXXV.

have cause for thankfulness rather than complaint. *If* then, as you have already heard and found, *they have called* me, who am *the Master of the family, Beelzebub*, and reviled me as a magician, whom they should have received as the Messiah, (see p. 336.) *how much more* will they be likely thus to abuse *his domestics*, whose character and station are so much inferior to his?

Mat. X. 25.

his lord: if they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* them of his household?

26 Since *therefore* you have my example before you, and suffer in my cause, *fear them not*, but courageously sustain the utmost efforts of their rage; and assure yourselves that I will support you till you have finished your testimony: *for there is nothing* now *hid which shall not be revealed: nor* has any thing passed in *secret* between us *which shall not be* universally *made known*.

26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

27 See to it then, that you remember to what purpose I have admitted you to so great an intimacy with me, and discoursed so largely concerning my kingdom; and *what I say to you in darkness, speak* [*it*] *in the light* of open day; *and what you hear* as it were whispered *in the ear, proclaim* publicly with a loud voice as *from the house-tops*.

27 What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the house-tops.

28 *And* though the boldness of your testimony may indeed at length cost you your lives, yet *be not afraid of them who* can only *kill the* mortal *body, and cannot kill* or hurt *the* immaterial *soul*, which will still survive in all its vigour while its tabernacle lies in ruins;[h] *but* much *rather fear*, lest, by being unfaithful in so important a trust, you should incur the displeasure of *him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*, and has power to fill the separate spirit with anguish, or at the final judgment to re-unite it to the body, and condemn both to everlasting misery in that infernal prison.

28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. X. 28.

How apparently fit is it that this eternal and almighty *God* should be the object of our humble *fear*, and that in comparison with him we should *fear nothing else!* All the *terrors* of the

[h] *Cannot kill the soul, &c.*] I have paraphrased the words, so as to illustrate the certain argument they contain, to prove the *existence* of the *soul* in a *separate state*, and its *perception* of that existence; else the *soul* would be as properly *killed* as the *body*. Grotius has an excellent note here.

world are disarmed by this; and by this are its *flatteries* also disarmed. In whatever stations of life we are fixed, let this engage us to be faithful to God in them: so shall we be most truly faithful to ourselves! SECT. LXXV.

The *apostles* were exposed to peculiar *dangers* and *trials*; but *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus*, must expect some degree of *persecution*; (2 Tim. iii. 12.) let us therefore *arm ourselves with the same mind*, that we may bear it with a truly Christian fortitude. May Divine grace teach us to mingle the 16
wisdom of the serpent, with the *innocence of the dove*, and to shelter ourselves from the ill usage of a perverse and sinful generation, so far only as we can do it without offering any violation to our consciences!

It is indeed matter of great lamentation, that the sentiments 21
of *benevolence* and *goodness*, which seem so natural to the human mind, and are always so ornamental and delightful, should prevail no more: and it is shameful, that the *name of religion*, so well calculated to cultivate *these sentiments*, should be made use of as an engine to destroy them; and instead of cementing *kingdoms* and *families* in closer and more affectionate bonds, should inspire them even with mortal animosity. Let us bless God for our public liberties; and earnestly pray, that where *persecution* reigns in its utmost terror, *the wrath of man* may *praise him*, and *the remainder of* that *wrath* be *restrained!* (Psal. lxxvi. 10.)

The *ill usage* which the blessed *Jesus* endured from an un- 24, 25
grateful world, may surely prevent our being surprised or offended, if we meet with some share of it too. May we be willing to *suffer with him*, that we may at length *reign with him!* (2 Tim. ii. 12.) And if by unexpected revolutions in providence, we should be called out to the severest trials, may *the spirit of glory and of God rest upon us!* and may we *not account* even *our lives dear unto us*, that, approving our fidelity to him, we may *finish our course with joy!* (1 Pet. iv. 14. and Acts xx. 24.)

SECT. LXXVI.

Our Lord concludes his charge to his apostles with an assurance of God's providential care for their encouragement; and with a promise of abundant future rewards to all that should faithfully serve him, or assist others in his work: and, after this, they separate from one another, and go to different parts to preach the gospel. Mat. X. 29, *to the end.* XI. 1. Mark VI. 12, 13. Luke IX. 6.

MAT. X. 29.

ARE not two sparrows sold for a

AFTER these faithful warnings of the dangers to which the apostles would be exposed in his service, our Lord went on to lay before them

SECT. LXXVI.

such encouragements as might animate their courage and pious zeal; and began with reminding them of the universal extent of the Divine Providence; *are not two* young *sparrows*, said he, *sold for a* single *farthing? yet* there is *not one of them* that by any accident *shall fall to the ground* and die *without* the observation and permission of *your* heavenly *Father.*[a] *And* not only are the more noble and vital parts of your animal frame regarded by God but *even the* very *hairs of your head are all numbered* by him. *Fear not, therefore*, that you should be overlooked; for, even as men, and especially as my servants and ambassadors, *you are more valuable than many sparrows*, or than the whole species of them; and therefore may assure yourselves that providence will watch over you.

Mat. X. 29.

30

31

And let it be a farther encouragement to you to remember, that whatever you may now suffer for your fidelity to me, it will on the whole be most amply rewarded; for the regard that every one expresses to me here, shall be publicly remembered and acknowledged hereafter: *whosoever, therefore, shall* courageously *confess me before men*, be he ever so mean in the eyes of the world, *I also will* not fail to *confess him* in all the glories of my final appearance, not only *before* the assembled world, but even in the immediate presence of *my Father in heaven*, to whose everlasting favour all my faithful servants shall be introduced: *But whosoever shall renounce me before men*, as ashamed or afraid to

32

33

farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 Fear ye not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before

[a] *Not one of them shall fall to the ground*, &c.] Some have supposed, there is a reference here to the two birds, which made a part of the leper's offering. (Lev. xiv. 4—7.) As if the sense of what our Lord expresses were, that providence determines which of those two insignificant animals shall *live*, and which be *killed*. But as the words are capable of a more extensive sense, and our Lord elsewhere mentions five sparrows just to the same purpose, (Luke xii. 6. sect. cxi.) I see no reason for paraphrasing them with any particular view to that rite. They are a full proof of the universality of the Divine Providence; but the singular interpositions of it in favour of good men, may in a much more convincing manner be argued, from the prayers and praises offered in scripture with regard to particular events, and the promises of temporal blessings made to those that fear and serve God. Nor can I think we are much concerned to determine, how far any of these are miraculous, and how far the result of general laws settled in an exact congruity to the temper and conduct of every individual affected by them, which an omniscient God foresaw, and which his perfect schemes might easily provide for, by methods to us unsearchable. It is plain, Homer thought Divine Providence interested itself in the lives of brute animals. See Iliad. lib. xv. ver. 274. See also Grotius, in loc.

men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

acknowledge his relation to me, *I also will renounce him before my Father in heaven* as a mean and unworthy creature, who has forfeited all claim to my patronage and favour in that awful day. SECT. LXXVI. Mat. X. 33.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace but a sword.

But, to prevent the mistaken expectations which the apostles might form of the immediate temporal prosperity of his kingdom, our Lord farther added, *Do not suppose that I am come to send* and establish *peace on the land* in which we dwell:[b] for, though the general purport of my gospel has so powerful a tendency to promote it, yet the prejudices and lusts of men will so oppose and pervert it, that it will rather seem, from the event of it, that *I came not to send peace, but a sword.* 34

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in law against her mother-in-law:

For a few will indeed embrace it; but they will be so cruelly persecuted even by their nearest relations, that I may say, *I am come to set a man at variance against his* own *father, and the daughter against her* own *mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law,*[c] when the circumstances of the family were such, that they might otherwise have agreed. 35

36 And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household.

So that the ties of blood shall be forgotten, and the bonds of friendship violated; *and a man's enemies*, yea oftentimes the most severe and inveterate of them, [*shall be*] *those of his own family*, and it may be, the nearest of his relations, from whom he might justly have expected the greatest friendship. 36

[b] *To send peace on the land* in which we dwell.] That the word γη often signifies *some particular land*, and especially *Judea*, rather than the *whole earth*, is undeniably plain; (compare Mat. xxiii. 35, and Luke iv. 25.) And I have given it that turn here, because there was no part of the world, where Christianity occasioned so much dissension, and none where peace was so much expected from the kingdom of the Messiah. Yet how very unjust it is, that any of those contentions which the gospel has accidentally occasioned, should be urged as an argument against its Divine authority, the reader may see in the excellent sermons of the present Bishop of Winchester on this subject, in his Miscellaneous Tracts. In one word, the matter will issue in this; that if Christianity has occasioned more discord than any other religion, the only reason is, because it animates its professors to greater zeal for the truth, and better proves it to be worth their while to *suffer for conscience sake.*

[c] *And the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.*] The thought seems to sink here, as it is much more usual for *mothers* and *daughters-in-law*, in whatever relation, to quarrel, than *natural parents* and *children*: but if we consider, that our Lord speaks of this as the first occasion of a quarrel between them, it may intimate a supposition, that they were persons of a friendly temper, who, even in such a relation, might otherwise have lived together on easy terms: a thought which seems to me to enliven the discourse, and which may lead us to reflect how often bigotry entirely transforms a natural disposition, that in itself was mild and amiable. Compare Luke xii. 53, note [1], Vol. II. sect. cxv.

SECT. LXXVI. Mat. X. 37.

Prepare yourselves then for such severe trials as these, by remembering, that *he who loves* his *father or mother more than me*, and is induced by his regard to them to disobey my precepts, or to renounce my doctrine, *is not worthy of me*, nor shall have any interest in my saving benefits: *and he that loves* even his *son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of* an interest in *me* and my friendship, though it should be an only child that he prefers to me, and for the

38 sake of whom he abandons my gospel. *And*, in a word, *he that* is so concerned for his own ease and safety that he will not suffer for my sake, and *does not* resolutely *take* up *his cross* when providentially laid in his way, *and follow after me*,[d] even to die upon it, when the honour of my name and cause requires it, and I, as the captain of his salvation, lead him on to it, cannot be owned as my faithful disciple, and *is not worthy of* an interest in *me*. (Compare Mark viii. 34. sect. lxxxix.)

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me;

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me:

39 Be assured however, that you shall find it to be well worth your while to endure all these extremities for my sake; for *he that finds* and saves *his life*, by deserting my cause, *shall lose it* on the whole, as he will thus incur a sentence of final condemnation and destruction;[e] *but he that* out of faithfulness to me *loses his life*, and lays it down *for my sake, shall find it* in a far more noble state of being, which infinitely better deserves the name of life.

39 He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.

40 And as for you, my servants, let none be afraid of shewing kindness to you, lest they should share with you in your sufferings for my sake; for *he that entertains you, does* in effect

40 He that receiveth you, receiveth

[d] *He that does not take* up *his cross, and follow after me.*] This alludes to the custom of persons *carrying the cross*, to which they were to be fastened; and was a strong intimation, that he should himself be *crucified*; and that none could be a sincere Christian without a willingness to bear even that shameful and cruel death for his sake, if he was called to it. See Grotius, in loc.

[e] *He that finds his life, shall lose it*, &c.] The sense that I have given to the paraphrase, as it is much more general, and more important, appears to be much preferable to that of Dr. Hammond, who interprets the text, of the Christians saving their lives by leaving Jerusalem in the last siege of that place by the Romans, and the Jews losing theirs by crowding into it. The beauty and energy of Christ's discourse in a parallel place, (Mat. xvi. 24—26, sect. lxxxix.) would be quite lost by this interpretation; and indeed many Christians had actually lost their lives for the gospel, many years before that siege commenced.

me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.

42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

entertain me, whose ministers you are; *and he that entertains me, does* also *entertain him that sent me*, and my heavenly Father will regard it as done to himself; as, on the other hand, all the slights and injuries which are offered to you will be considered as reflecting not only on me, but on him. And did men truly understand their own interest, they would rejoice to assist you in that noble work in which you are engaging: for *he that* hospitably *entertains a prophet*,[f] *in the name of a prophet*, or with a pious regard to the office he bears, *shall receive the reward of a prophet* himself, or a reward proportionable to the worth of the person he shelters and accommodates in a time of danger and difficulty; *and he that entertains* [*any*] *righteous man in the name of a righteous man*, or with a cordial regard to the virtues of his character, *shall* himself *receive the reward of a righteous man*. Nor shall even the smallest *and* cheapest favour to the least of my servants be forgotten; for *whosoever*, being able to do no more, *shall give to drink unto one of these little ones*, or to one of these my followers, who makes the meanest appearance, even so much as *a cup of cold water only*, to refresh him in the fatigue to which he is exposed in my service, if he shall give it to him *in the name of a disciple*, or with a real affection to him on account of his relation to me, *verily I say unto you, he shall by no means lose his* proportionable *reward*, but shall find himself abundantly repaid both with present and future blessings.

SECT. LXXVI. Mat. X. 40. 41 42

Mat. XI. 1. And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to

And it came to pass, after this solemn and instructive charge had been delivered, that *when Jesus had made an end of giving instructions to his twelve disciples*, and had prepared them for the service they were now to undertake, *he* did not lay aside the work himself, but still pursued it with an unwearied diligence and zeal, and *departed thence to teach* the Jews, in other

Mat. XI. 1.

[f] Hospitably *entertains a prophet.*] The word δεχομενος here plainly signifies to *entertain in an hospitable way*, as it does likewise Heb. xi. 31; Jam. ii. 25; and elsewhere: nor can the gradation in the following words be understood without such an interpretation.—The apostles were, no doubt, regarded as a kind of divinely inspired prophets; though that title, by way of distinction, was afterwards appropriated to persons of an inferior rank. 1 Cor. xii. 28. and Eph. iv. 11.

SECT. LXXVI.

parts, the doctrines of his gospel, *and to preach in their cities.*

teach and to preach in their cities.

Mark VI. 12.

The twelve apostles also, in pursuance of the commission they had now received, set out at the same time; *and they departed* from the presence of their Master, *and went through the towns* of Galilee, and the neighbouring places, *and preached the gospel* wherever they came; insisting with great earnestness upon it, *that men should repent* of their sins, and prepare for that glorious manifestation of his presence which God was about to favour them with.

Mark VI. 12. And they [departed, and] went out [through the towns,] and preached [the gospel,] that men should repent. [Luke IX. 6.—]

13 *And* in consequence of that miraculous power with which Jesus had invested them, *they expelled many demons, and anointed many sick persons with oil*, as a signal of healing which he had been pleased to direct, (compare Jam. v. 14.) *and* perfectly *cured them*, whatsoever their malady was; and this they did *every where* as they went on in their progress.

13 And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them* [every where.] [Luke IX.—6.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. X. 37, 38.

Justly may the blessed *Jesus* set so high a value on himself, and on the blessings of his grace: justly may he insist upon our readiness to *abandon all for him*, who is so just an equivalent for all. May his grace teach us to *love him more* than the dearest of our *relations*, and even to be ready *for his sake* to sacrifice our *lives!* May it make us willing to *take up* and bear *any cross* for him, who *bore his cross* and expired upon it for us!

34, 35 36

The *gospel* has indeed been the occasion of much *contention* and *persecution*, not only in *Judea*, but elsewhere: yet let us not charge it upon any malignity, or any deficiency in that, but on the lusts and corruptions of men, who have either directly opposed, or grossly perverted it. Let us endeavour to arm ourselves with *courage* to encounter, and resolution to endure, whatever *persecutions* or *injuries*, our adherence to it may cost us; ever confiding in that gracious *Providence*, which extends

29, 30 39

itself even to the *meanest creatures:* reposing ourselves on the *support* of *divine consolations*, and esteeming ourselves happy, even in *losing our lives* in this world, if we may *find them* in that which is everlasting.

42

In the mean time, may this excellent *discourse* of our blessed *Redeemer* animate us to every *work of faith*, and every *labour of love!* Let not the *poorest* be discouraged from some charitable attempt for the good of others; since the munificence of our heavenly Master will remember *even a cup of cold water*, given to *the least of his servants*, under that character. Yet

since there will be such a *variety of rewards*, proportionable to different degrees of liberality and zeal, let us indulge a generous ambition of *abounding in the work of the Lord*, that we may shine with distinguished glory in the day of retribution, and have *an abundant entrance into his kingdom.* SECT. LXXVI.

SECT. LXXVII.

Herod hears of Jesus, and suspects him to be John the Baptist, whom he had lately murdered in a manner which is here recounted, Mat. XIV. 1, 2, 6—12. Mark VI. 14—29. Luke IX. 7—9.

MAT. XIV. 1.

MAT. XIV. 1. AT that time [king] Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus, [LUKE, *and* of all that was done by him;] [for his name was spread abroad;] [MARK VI. 14. LUKE IX. 7.—]

NOW *at that time*,[a] while the apostles were making their circuit about the country, proclaiming every where the glories of their great Master, and working miracles in his name, *king Herod* (as *the tetrarch* we mentioned above[b] was generally called) *heard of the fame of Jesus* [*and*] was informed by many *of all the* marvellous *things that were done by him* and his apostles; *for*, by the account they gave concerning him in their mission, concurring with his own miracles and preaching, *his name was* every where *spread abroad*, and had reached many places far more distant than the court of Herod.[c] SECT. LXXVII. Mat. XIV. 1.

2 And [he] said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do

2 And immediately his own guilty conscience suggested a fear which he could not forbear disclosing to those that were about him; *and* such was his surprise and terror, that *he said* even *to his* own *servants*, *This is John the Baptist*, whom I put to death; *e is* undoubtedly *risen from the dead, and for this reason* he appears with greater honour than ever, and these *ex-*

[a] *At that time.*] Both Mark and Luke so expressly connect this with the preceding section, that there can be no room to doubt that this is its true place.

[b] *The tetrarch* we mentioned above.] Though he was called *tetrarch* for a particular reason, as heir to only a *fourth part* of his father's dominions; yet in this district (which was that of *Galilee*) he was properly a *king*. See note [n] on Mat. ii. 22. sect. xiii and Luke iii. 1. sect. xv.

[c] More distant than the court of Herod.] The letters pretended to have passed between Christ, and Abgarus, king of Edessa, and preserved by Eusebius, (Hist. Eccles. lib. 1. cap. 13.) are probably spurious; though Dr. Cave, the learned Dr. Grabe, (Spicileg. Vol. I. p. 1—6.) and the celebrated Mr. Addison, (in his Discourse on Christianity, sect. 1.) seem inclined to receive them.—They might however have their foundation in some message from that prince to Jesus. But the remark in the paraphrase is much more certainly confirmed by Mat. iv. 24, 25. sect. xxvi. p. 206.

SECT. LXXVII.

traordinary powers now *operate in him*, though before he wrought no miracles.

Luke IX.—7

And notwithstanding Herod had imbibed the principles of the Sadducees,[d] which were directly opposite to such a supposition, *he was exceedingly anxious*[e] on account of the reports he heard; *for* the notion was not merely his own, but *it was said* too *by some* others, *that John was risen from the dead*, and would undoubtedly use his miraculous power to punish those 8 who had murdered him. *And* it was also conjectured *by some that Elijah had appeared*, according to the general expectation, as the forerunner of the Messiah; (compare Mal. iv. 5; Mat. xi. 14; and xvii. 10—12.) *and by others, that one of the ancient prophets was risen again* from the dead: *and others* also *said, It is* certainly *a prophet* of the former generations, *or* [*a person*] at least *like one of the prophets*;[f] for such miraculous works do as evidently speak a Divine mission as any of theirs ever did.

Mark VI. 16.

But in the midst of this variety of opinions, *when Herod heard* what was discoursed [*of Jesus*] *he* was exceedingly distressed, and *said* with great anxiety, *John I have* certainly *beheaded*, and received the strongest proofs that the execution was performed; *but who is this, of whom I hear such things?* I would not willingly believe it, yet I cannot but suspect that whatsoever be the name he now assumes, *it is John*, that venerable holy man *whom I beheaded*, and greatly fear *he is risen from the dead.* And he was so uneasy under the consciousness of the enormous crime he had committed in putting him to death, that, licentious as his principles and character were,[g] he was alarmed and terrified with the

shew forth themselves in him. [MARK VI. —14.]

LUKE IX—7. And he was perplexed, because that it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again: [and others said, that it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.] — [MARK VI. 15.]

MARK VI. 16. But when Herod heard *thereof*, he said, [John have I beheaded; but who is this, of whom I hear such things?] It is John whom I beheaded, he is risen from the dead. [And

[d] Herod had imbibed the principles of the Sadducees.] See note [g] below.

[e] *He was exceedingly anxious.*] Διηπορει strongly expresses a mixture of *doubt* and *fear*, which must necessarily throw the mind into a very uneasy situation.

[f] *A prophet, or a person* at least *like one of the prophets.*] This plainly proves, that by the word *prophet* they generally meant, one of the holy men whom God had raised up to his people in former ages; and if the particle ἢ be omitted, as it is in some manuscripts, the argument is equally conclusive. See note [c], sect. 1.

[g] Licentious as his principles and character were.] Josephus tells us, that the Sadducean principles prevailed much among the rich and great; (Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 1, (al. 2) § 4.) And it is very probable, Herod was of this sect, as what is called in one text *the leaven of the Sadducees*, is in another called *the leaven of Herod*; (compare Mat. xvi. 6, with Mark viii. 15,) not to mention a kind of hereditary quarrel which there seems to have been between the Herodian family and the Pharisees. (See note [f] on Mark iii. 6, sect. 1.)—But it is no easy matter to

desired to see him.] [Luke IX. 9.]

apprehension of his being actually returned to life; *and*, not knowing what to think of the reports he heard of Jesus, *he* earnestly *desired to see him*, that his doubts might be removed. SECT. LXXVII. Mark VI. 16.

17 For Herod had —laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias's sake:—

Thus was his guilty mind perplexed and tormented, and not without reason; *for*, as we have before observed,[h] *Herod had* formerly *seized John, and bound him* with chains *in prison, on account of* the reproof he gave him for his marrying *Herodias; Because*, as Herod had seduced her from his brother Philip, who was still living and had a daughter by her, *John had said* to him, with a freedom that he could not bear, *It is not lawful for thee* thus *to have thy brother's wife. And* we had likewise added, that for this reason *Herodias* also was incensed against him, and *would have put him to death; but* for a long time *she could not* compass her design; *For Herod had* so great *a reverence for John*, that he would not yield to her solicitations. But we must now inform the reader, that before this time she had found a way of accomplishing her cruel purpose. 17

18 For John had said,—It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. 18

19 Therefore Herodias—would have killed him, but she could not. 19

20 For Herod feared John.— 20

For as her heart was filled with malice, *and* she was ever watching for an opportunity to be revenged on John, at length *a convenient day happened* of preferring her petition with unexpected circumstances of advantage; a public festival was kept, *when Herod on his birth-day*[i] *made a* splendid *supper for* the entertainment of *his lords*, *and* of all the *chief officers* of his army,[k] *and other persons of distinguished rank* 21

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birth-day made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee: [Mat. XIV.—6.]

arrive at a steady belief of so great an absurdity as the mortality of the soul. The existence of the soul after death, and a state of future retribution, and other evident principles of natural religion connected with both, will even force themselves upon the unbelieving heart, and wring it with anguish, which it cannot always, though it may frequently, conceal. This is admirably illustrated by Bishop Atterbury in his sermon on this text and subject.

[h] As we have before observed.] I have ventured to repeat here a few clauses of Mark, because they seemed to me absolutely necessary to introduce the following account of Herod's beheading John the Baptist. These verses are before inserted at large, in § xxviii. p. 164, 165.

[i] *When Herod on his birth day.*] Some great critics, and particularly Grotius, Heinsius, and Reland, chuse to interpret this, of the *day of* Herod's *accession*, rather than *his birth*, which they think would have been more properly expressed by γενεθλιων than γενεσιων. (See Elsn. Observ. Vol. I. p. 100—102.) But it is evident, the seventy use ημερα γενεσιως for a birth-day; Gen. xl. 20.

[k] *Chief officers* of his army.] Though the word χιλιαρχος properly signifies one who had the command of a thousand men, and held a rank in their army nearly answering to that of the colonels in ours, there can be no reason to imagine that the entertainment was confined just to that rank of officers: I have therefore rendered it in a more general way.

SECT. LXXVII. Mark VI. 22.

in Galilee, over which he presided: *And*, to grace the solemnity, Salome, *the daughter of the above mentioned Herodias* by Philip her former husband, a young lady of celebrated beauty, *coming in* publicly among them, *and dancing in the midst* of the assembly; this instance of condescension, so unusual in those days and countries, especially in persons of such high dignity,[l] was so exceedingly agreeable *and pleasing* unto *Herod and his guests*, that *the king said* before them all *to the maiden* in a kind of transport, *Ask of me whatever thou*

23 *wilt, and I will give it thee. And* when she seemed surprised at such a declaration, to encourage her to depend on what he said, *he promised her with* the solemnity of *an oath* [*and*] profanely and foolishly *sware unto her* more than once,[m] *I will give thee whatsoever thou wilt ask of me, even* though it should be *to the* [*value of*] *half of my kingdom.*

24 *And*, young as she was, she perceived this was now grown a circumstance of high importance, and might be managed to considerable advantage; *she* therefore *went out, and said to her Mother*, who was not in the assembly, *What shall I ask? And she*, struck with this unexpected opportunity of executing her revenge, eagerly *replied*, Ask *the head of John the Baptist*, who would have expelled and ruined us both: for nothing in the power of the king to grant could give me equal satisfaction.

25 *And*, though at first she hesitated at so shocking a proposal, yet *being* thus *before urged* to it *by her mother*, and at length confirmed in the resolution,[n] *she immediately*, after a very

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced [before them] and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. MAT. XIV. 6.]

23 And he [promised her with an oath, *and*] sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom. [MAT. XIV. 7.]

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she [being before instructed of her mother,] came in straightway with

[l] This instance of condescension so unusual in those days,' &c.] Dr. Lardner very justly observes, that it was very unusual for ladies of a high rank to appear before the men, (Esth. i. 10—12.) and much less to dance at such banquets as these. See his Credibility of the Gospel History, Vol. I. part i. p. 23.

[m] *Sware unto her* more than once.] This may be very well concluded, because both the evangelists use the plural ὤμοσε. Mat. xiv. 9, and Mark vi. 26.

[n] *Being before urged* to it *by her mother*, and at length confirmed in the resolution.] So the word προβιβασθεισα seems to intimate, as Beza, with his usual accuracy, has observed; and there is indeed much more reason to wonder, that she was induced to make such a request at all, than that she made some difficulty for a while of presenting it, considering how savage it seemed, and how many pleasing views must be sacrificed to it. But at last her mother's remonstrances seem to have wrought her up to great emotion, which the evangelist well expresses by saying, *She came in* εὐθεως μετα σπουδης *immediately*, and *with eagerness*. The whole narration of Mark, which is by far the most circumstantial, is very much animated; as Mr. Blackwall has justly observed in his Sacred Classics, Vol. I. p. 383.

haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me [here] by and by, in a charger, the head of John the Baptist. [MAT. XIV. 8.]

26 And the king was exceeding sorry; [nevertheless] for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him [at meat,] he would not reject her, [*but* commanded *it* to be given *her*.] [MAT. XIV. ..]

27 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded [John] in the prison. [Mat. XIV. 10.]

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel [brought *it*, *and*] gave it to her mother. [MAT. XIV. 11.]

short absence, *came into the king with* speed in her motion and *eagerness* in her countenance, *and made her demand, saying, I desire that,* in accomplishment of thy promise, *thou wouldest give me, presently, the head of John the Baptist;* and that I may be sure the execution is done, let the head be brought and delivered to me *here in a charger*, or large dish.[o]

SECT. LXXVII. Mark VI. 25.

And the King was exceedingly sorry, as well as greatly surprised, that she should prefer so strange a petition; *nevertheless*, as she persisted in it, *for the sake of his* repeated *oaths, and* out of regard to *his guests*, in whose presence they were made, *he would not deny her*, [*but*] granted what she asked, and *ordered that it should be given her.* 26

And immediately the king sent one of his guards[p] as an executioner, that very night, *and commanded his head to be brought* into the assembly: *and*, as soon as the soldier had received his orders, *he* presently *went, and* without any further warning, *beheaded John in the prison, And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the maiden: and the maiden*, forgetting the tenderness of her sex,[q] and the dignity of her rank, with a steady cruelty, agreeable to her relation to so ill a woman, *brought* [*and*] *delivered it to her mother* with her own hands. And thus, till the righteous judgment of God overtook them all,[r] they gratified themselves 27 28

[o] *The head of John the Baptist in a charger.*] It is well known, that it was, and is customary with princes in those eastern parts, to require the head of those they order to be executed to be brought to them, that they may be assured of their death. The Grand Signior does it to this day. See Dr Lardner, in the place cited in note [l], p. 44, 45.—The word πινακι signifies *a large dish*, which the antiquated word *charger* well expresses; for which reason I chose to retain it.

[p] *One of his guards.*] So σπεκουλατωρα properly signifies, or *one who was then standing centry*. There were no executioners in those times, whose peculiar business it was to put persons to death.

[q] Forgetting the tenderness of her sex.] This may perhaps be intimated in the repetition of the word *maiden*. Jerom tells us, that Herodias treated the Baptist's head in a very disdainful manner, pulling out the tongue which she imagined had injured her, and piercing it with a needle.

[r] Till the righteous judgment of God overtook them all.] Dr. Whitby, after many others, observes, that Providence interested itself very remarkably in the revenge of this murder on all concerned. Herod's army was defeated in a war occasioned by his marrying Herodias, which many Jews thought a judgment sent upon him for the death of John: (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. cap. 5. (al. 7.) § 1, 2.) Both he and Herodias, whose ambition occasioned his ruin, were afterwards driven from their kingdom with great regret, and died in banishment at Lyons in Gaul: (Joseph. ibid. cap. 7. (al. 9,) § 2.) And if any credit may be given to Nicephorus, (Hist. lib. 1. cap. 20.) Salome, the young lady who made this cruel request, fell into the ice as she was walking over it, which closing suddenly, cut off her head.

SECT. LXXVII. in the indulgence of their lusts, and triumphed in the murder of this holy prophet.

Mark VI. 27. *And* the next day, *his disciples hearing [of it,] came* to the prison, *and* having permission to do it, *took up his corpse, and laid it* with great reverence, and due lamentation, *in a sepulchre* belonging to some of them who were willing to pay this last act of duty to their master's memory: *and* then they *went and told Jesus* what had happened, and remembering the repeated testimony which John had borne to him, continued their attendance upon him.

29 And when his disciples heard of it, they came, and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb; [and went and told Jesus.] [MAT. XIV. 12.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mark VI. 14, 16. How dreadful a thing is it to have a guilty and accusing conscience! and how remarkable was the force of it, in the instance before us! *Herod* was a *king*, yet it addressed him in language of terror, and made itself heard and felt, amidst all the hurries and flatteries of a court. Vain was the power of a *prince*; vain the caresses of a favourite *mistress* basely gratified with the blood of a prophet; and vain the yet more besotting *tenets* of a *Sadducee*. In one instance at least, a *resurrection* shall be *believed*; and if a *prophet* arise in *Israel*, *Herod* shall be among the first to say, *It is John the Baptist, risen from the dead*; and shall be ready to forebode the sad effects of his recovered life, and to prognosticate evil to himself from the *mighty works* he performed. Let us make it our care to preserve *a conscience void of offence*, that instead of a continual *torment*, it may be to us a *continual feast!*

22, 23 And if we really desire to preserve it, let us take heed that we be not excessively *transported* with the *entertainments* of life, or rashly *enter* ourselves into *engagements*, which perhaps may plunge us into some degree of guilt, whether they be performed or violated.

24 We see, in this dreadful instance of *Herodias*, what an implacable degree of *malice* may arise in the hearts of sinners, on being *reproved* for the most scandalous and mischievous vices. Instead of owning the *obligation* to one that would have plucked her *as a brand out of the burning*, she *thirsts* insatiably for his *blood*; and chooses rather to indulge her cruelty and revenge in *taking away his life*, than to gratify her avarice and ambition in *demanding a gift*, that might have been equal *to the half of a kingdom*.

25, 27 But how *mysterious* was that *providence* which left the *life* of so *holy a man* in such infamous hands, and permitted it to be

sacrificed to the malice of an abandoned *harlot*, to the petulancy of a *vain girl*, and to the rashness of a foolish and perhaps an intoxicated *prince*, who made the *prophet's head* the *reward of a dance! The ways of God are unsearchable!* but we are sure he can never be at a loss to *repay* his servants in another world, for the greatest *sufferings* they endure in this, and even for *life itself* when given up in his cause. SECT. LXXVII.

We may reasonably conclude, that *death* could never be an *unseasonable surprise* to this *excellent saint*. When the *executioner came into the prison* by night, perhaps breaking in upon his slumbers, and executed his *bloody commission* almost as soon as he declared it, a soul like his might *welcome the stroke*, as the means of liberty and glory; assured that the transient *agony of a moment* would transmit it to a *kingdom*, where *the least* of its inhabitants would be in holiness, honour, and felicity, *superior to John* in his most prosperous and successful state on earth. Verse 27

His enemies might a while insult over him, while *his disciples* were mingling their tears with his dust, and lamenting the residue of *his days cut off in the midst*. His *death* was *precious in the sight of the Lord*, and *the triumphing of the wicked* was *short*. So will he ere long *plead the cause* of all his injured people, and give *a cup of trembling and astonishment* to those that have made themselves *drunk with their blood*. Let *cruelty* and *tyranny* do their worst, *verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth*. (Psal. lviii. 11.) 29

SECT. LXXVIII.

When the apostles were returned from executing their commission, our Lord passes over the sea of Tiberias; and finding vast multitudes had followed him to the place of his intended retirement, he instructs and heals them; and, having miraculously fed above five thousand, retires afterwards to pray. Mat. XIV. 13—23. Mark VI. 30—46. Luke IX. 10—17. John VI. 1—15.

MARK VI. 30.

Mark VI. 30. AND the apostles [when they were returned,] gathered themselves together

AND quickly after this awful event of the Baptist's death,[a] which his been just related, *the* twelve *apostles, when they were returned* from their circuit, *gather together unto Jesus, and told him all* the occurrences of their SECT. LXXVIII. Mark VI. 30.

[a] After this awful event of the Baptist's death.] Matthew, Mark, and Luke, are all so express in the connection of this story with the foregoing, that there can be no doubt as to the propriety and necessity of placing it here.

SECT. LXXVIII

late journey; recounting to him *both what* miracles *they had done* by his divine assistance, *and what* doctrine *they had taught* according to his direction.

Mark VI. 31.

And when Jesus heard [*of it,*] and was informed (as we have just now seen) of the death of John, as well as of the event of the journey which his apostles had been making, *he said to them, Come ye yourselves privately* with me *into a solitary place* in the neighbouring desert, *and repose* yourselves *a while* after the fatigue of your journey, that we may there indulge such meditations as are suitable to this awful dispensation. And it was necessary to give them this advice, *for there were many* continually *coming and going* to and from the public place in which they then were, *so that they had no opportunity even to eat* without interruption, and much less had they leisure for religious retirement and recollection.

unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught (Luke IX. 10.—]

31 And [when Jesus heard *of it,*] he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat. [Mat. XIV. 13—]

Luke IX. 10.

And accordingly, *after these things,*[b] *he took them* with him, *and retired* from the multitude: *and they departed from thence,* (even from the place where they had been so much crowded and hurried,) and setting out *in a ship privately,* they withdrew *into a* lonely *desert belonging to the city called Bethsaida,* which we have several times mentioned before. [*And*] as this desert was divided from the place they set out from, by a creek or bay of the sea, *Jesus* in passing to it *went over* a part of *the sea of Galilee, which is* also sometimes called [*the sea*] *of Tiberias,*[c] because that is the most considerable place on its shore.

Luke IX. — 10. And [John, after these things,] he took them and went aside, [Mark, and they departed [thence] by ship,] privately, into a desert place, belonging to the city called Bethsaida; [John, *and* Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias.] [Mat. XIV.—13.—Mark VI. 32.—John VI. 1.]

[b] *After these things.*] I have before observed, (in note [a] on John v. 1, p. 262.) that Mr. Manne supposes this sixth chapter of John ought to be connected with the end of the fourth; (see his Dissertations, p. 157—163.) and the rather, because he fancies one may find a connection between John iv. 54. and vi. 1; the first of which texts tells us, that *Jesus was in Galilee;* and the latter, that *he went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.* But I cannot see the least force in the argument, considering how often Christ changed his place, and came back again to that which he had formerly visited: nor can he urge it with any consistence, because, according to his own scheme of the harmony, Christ had crossed the sea to Gergasa, and dispossessed the Legion, after the cure of the nobleman's son, and long before the passing over the sea, that is here referred to, (which was plainly not to Gergasa, but to the desert of Bethsaida:) so that there is no shadow of a reason for such an unexampled transposition, which has no copy or version to support it. Besides, that this requires another change in ver. 4, which is equally arbitrary, and (as we shall shew in note [c] of this section,) most contrary not only to the faith of all copies, but to the reason of things.

[c] Sometimes called *the sea of Tiberias.*] We have before observed, that it had

SECT. LXXVIII

Mark VI. 33.

Mark VI. 33. And [when] the people saw them departing, and many knew him, [and heard *thereof*] [John, a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles, which he did on them that were diseased:] and [they] ran a-foot thither out of all [the]cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him. [Mat XIV.—13, Luke IX. 11. —John VI. 2.]

And when the people who had been attending on his ministry *saw them departing and*, though he was at some distance, *many* of them *knew him*,[d] *and* others thereabout *heard of* [*it*,] *a great multitude followed him; because they had seen his miracles, which he* had just before *performed on them that were diseased*, and, struck with the energy of them, were impatiently desirous still to hear so Divine a Teacher. *And*, therefore, observing how he steered his course, and guessing right as to the place at which he intended to land, *they ran thither on foot*, and increased their numbers *out of all the cities* by which they passed: *and* they pursued their journey with such eagerness, that they *outwent them* who had taken ship, *and*, getting round to the shore where he was to land, they *came together to him*, and stood ready to salute him in a large body.

34 And Jesus, when he came out saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd; [Luke, and he received them] and began to teach them many things, [Luke, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and [healed their sick *even all*] them that had need of healing. [Mat XIV. 14. Luke IX.—11.]

And Jesus, when he came out of the ship, *and* 34 *saw* such *a great multitude* of people, who had taken so much pains to meet him there, *was moved with* tender *compassion for them*; *because* he perceived *they were* sadly neglected by those who ought to have been their spiritual guides, and were forced to wander from place to place, *as sheep having no shepherd* to feed and take care of them; *and* with this he was struck to such a degree, that though he had come thither for retirement, *he* did not either dismiss or forsake them; but, on the contrary, *received them* in a most condescending and indulgent manner, *and began* with renewed zeal and fervency *to teach them many* important *things*; *and*, in particular, *spake to them concerning the kingdom of God* which he was now erecting, *and healed* many of *their sick* people, [*even all*] *those that* were brought to him and *had need of healing*.

various names. (See note [b] on Luke v. 1, p. 195.)—It is not necessary to suppose they crossed the lake: if they did, it was only over the extremity of it; or possibly they only made a coasting voyage round some creek or bay of it; otherwise it is hard to say how the people going on foot could have been there *before him*, as it is said they were, Mark vi. 33. See Lightf. Hor. Hebr. on Mat. xiv. 15; and Calmet, Dissert. Tom. I. part i. p. 89.

[d] *Many knew him.*] It should seem that Christ ordered the vessel to be prepared at some distance from the place where the multitude was; yet not so far off, but some of the company could make a shift to distinguish who he was.

SECT. LXXVIII.

John VI. 3.

4

Luke IX. 12.

And, in prosecution of this design, that he might be heard and seen with the greater advantage, *Jesus went up into a mountain, and there sat* down *with his disciples*, and the multitudes about him. *And* indeed it was a season of the year which admitted it; for the spring was now so far advanced that *the passover, a* grand *feast of the Jews, was near*.[e] *And when* they had thus spent *the day* in a delightful attendance upon him, and it *now began to decline, and* indeed *was so far spent that the evening came on, then* some of *his disciples*, and particularly *the twelve* apostles, who were now round him, *came to him, and said, This is a* solitary *desert place*, where there is neither

JOHN VI. 3. And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

LUKE IX. 12. And when the day began to wear away, [MARK, and was now far spent,] [and it was evening;] then [his disciples] *even* the twelve, came [MARK, unto him and said, This is a desert place, and now the time is far

[e] *The passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.*] Almost all who have compiled harmonies of the gospel, have concluded that *this* was at least the *third passover* of our Lord's public ministry; and Sir Isaac Newton reckons it the *fourth*. (See note[a] on John ii. 13, p. 141, 142.) But Mr. Manne advances a most singular hypothesis, which is, that it was no passover at all, but was the feast of Pentecost; (Dissert. p. 163.) But he has no authority for making such an alteration, all the old manuscripts and versions agreeing with the received reading, which therefore should not be changed without urgent necessity: whereas there is no necessity at all for it in this place: nor is it possible that *this* should be, as he supposes, the *feast of pentecost*, following the first passover of Christ's ministry; because such things are expressly said to have happened between *that passover* and *this feast*, as could not be crowded into the narrow compass assigned them on this scheme. For, according to Mr. Manne's scheme, the passover happened on April the 2d, the feast of Pentecost on May the 23d, and *this miracle of feeding the five thousand* at the latter end of April. Now he himself allows that, after the first passover, [at which he staid long enough to work many miracles, and to have a conference with Nicodemus,] Jesus [having as John tells us, chap. iii. 22, tarried some time with his disciples in Judea, and made so many disciples there, that he alarmed the Pharisees; see John iv. 1.] went through Samaria; and after having spent two days at Sichar, [and every hour in such a circumstance is important,] came into Galilee, and taught in all their synagogues; preached the Sermon on the Mount; and then [having, as Luke tells us, chap. iv. 31, dwelt a while at Capernaum, and taught them on the sabbath days,] cured Peter's mother-in-law: then having cast out Legion, cured the paralytic, called Matthew, and [after having kept them with him some time, as Mark and Luke intimate, sect. lii. p. 294.] sent out the twelve apostles; and having on one sabbath vindicated his disciples for plucking the ears of corn, and on another cured the man with a withered hand, he then goes to Nazareth, [where he spent at least one sabbath;] and, after many other miracles, and the return of the twelve, goes into the desert; [John the Baptist in the mean time having been seized, (for it is directly said he was at liberty after the first passover, John iii. 24.) and after frequent audiences, while Herodias long waited an opportunity to destroy him, being at length beheaded.] All these events, except those included in crotchets, Mr. Manne expressly mentions; (p. 166—171.) and those that are so included, the evangelists in express words connect with the rest. Now I appeal to any unprejudiced persons, whether it is possible these things could happen in a month. It may rather be doubted whether two years be sufficient for them, and others connected with them in the preceding sections. On the whole, I cannot recollect any instance in which a person of such distinguished learning and abilities has been betrayed, by love to an hypothesis, into so palpable an error.—The reader will pardon my having been so large in confuting a scheme so inconsistent with that laid down above; and will, I hope, perceive that it is proved, not only to be precarious or unlikely, but even impossible.

'passed,] send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, [Mark, and buy themselves bread,] and get victuals: [Mark, for they have nothing to eat.] [Mat. XIV. 15. Mark VI. 35, 36.]

food nor lodging to be had, *and the time* of day *is now far advanced*; it will therefore be proper to put an end to thy discourse, and to *dismiss the multitude, that they may go into the towns and country-places round about* us, *and* find conveniencies to *lodge* there, *and may* have opportunity to *buy themselves bread and get* other *food; for they have* fasted all the day, and can have *nothing* here *to eat.* SECT. LXXVIII. Luke IX. 12.

John VI. 5. When Jesus then lift up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?

Then Jesus lifted up his eyes, and, seeing a great company who (as was said before) were *come* out of all the cities *to him, he says to Philip*, who, being a native of Bethsaida, was acquainted in that country, (John i. 44. sect. xxii.) How and *whence shall we buy bread* for the entertainment of all these people, *that they may eat* with me before we part? (*And this he said* only *to try him*, and to give him an opportunity of observing what followed more attentively; *for he himself* very well *knew what he was about to do*, and had determined how to proceed.) But *Philip* forgetting what had been done of this kind by Elijah and Elisha, prophets so far inferior to Jesus, (1 Kings xvii. 14—16, and 2 Kings iv. 4—6, 42—44.) and even by Jesus himself at Cana in Galilee, (John ii. 6—11. sect. xxiii.) was surprised that he should mention such a thing, and *answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread*, or as much as could be purchased for two hundred denarii,[1] which is at present all our little stock, *is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little* refreshment, and much less would it furnish them with a full meal; it will be necessary therefore immediately to dismiss them, that they may have time to shift for themselves.

6 (And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.)

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

[Mat. XIV. 16. But Jesus said unto them, They need not

But Jesus said to him, and to *them* that stood near him, who had but just now made the same proposal, *They have no need to go away* fasting, nor am I willing to dismiss them so without any supply; and therefore let them have food for their refreshment here; and, instead of sending them away to provide for themselves, do you

Mat. XIV. 16.

[1] For two hundred denarii.] This amounts to about six pounds five shillings of our money. The mention of that sum seems to intimate, (as in the paraphrase,) that their whole stock amounted to so much.

SECT. LXXVIII

make ready for them, and *give ye them* [*something*] *to eat.* *And they say unto him, Shall we* then *go* to any neighbouring place, *and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread* [*and*] *meat for all this* multitude of *people, and give* [*it*] *them to eat*, that it may go as far as it can? If such be thy pleasure, we shall not offer to dispute it, whatever be the consequence as to ourselves.

Mat. XIV. 16.

depart, give ye them to eat. [And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, [LUKE, *and* meat for all this people,] and give them to eat?] [MARK VI. 37. LUKE IX. 13—]

Mark VI. 38.

But, as *he* purposed in himself to entertain the multitude out of the little store of provisions they had, Jesus *says to them, How many loaves have you* here already: *go and see* that, and there will be no need of buying any more.

MARK VI. 38.—He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see.

John VI. 8.

Upon which *one of his disciples*, namely, *Andrew*, who was *Simon Peter's brother*, went to inquire; and, soon returning back with an account of what they had, he *says unto him*,

JOHN VI. 8. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 I find *there is a lad here, that has five* coarse *barley loaves, and two small fishes*, which he would let us have; *but we have no more* to offer them, either of bread or meat; [*and*] *what are they among so many*, to satisfy the hunger of so great a company? *And he said* to them, Do you be under no concern about the scantiness of your provisions; but *bring them hither to me*, for even these shall suffice.

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but [LUKE, we have no more, *and*] what are they among so many? [MAT. XIV. 17. MARK VI.—38. LUKE IX.—13.]

Mat. XIV. 18.

MAT. XIV. 18. He said, Bring them hither to me.

19 *And*, when they were brought to him, *he commanded the multitude to sit down upon the green grass*, which at that season of the year was pretty high: *and*, that the distribution of the food might be more orderly, and the number of persons be the better observed, *he said to his disciples*, let them be placed in order, and *cause them all to sit down by companies* in rows. *Now there was* then *much grass in the place*,[g] in which they might sit down with ease and pleasure.

19—And he commanded the multitude to sit down [upon the green grass;] [LUKE, and he said to his disciples,] [Make them all sit down by companies.] [JOHN, Now there was much grass in the place.] [MARK VI. 39. LUKE IX. 14. —JOHN VI. 10.—]

Luke IX. 15.

And his disciples would no more dispute the matter with him; but *they did so* as the Lord had commanded them, *and caused them all to*

LUKE IX. 15. And they did so, and made them all sit

[g] *There was much grass in the place.*] It is also said, (Mark vi. 39,) that the *grass* was *green*: as it was before the passover, but not near the feast of pentecost, when even the corn harvest was concluded. Though they sat thus on the ground, under no canopy but the sky, and had only barley bread, and, as it seems, cold, or dried fishes to eat, and probably nothing but water to drink; yet, as Mr. Henry truly and beautifully observes on Mat. xiv. 19, "There was more real "grandeur displayed by the Master of "this feast, than by Ahasuerus in that "royal feast which was intended to *shew* "*the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the* "*honour of his excellent majesty.*" See Esth. i. 4—7.

down. [JOHN, So the men sat down] [in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties,][JOHN, in number about five thousand.] [MARK VI. 40. LUKE IX.—14. JOHN VI.—10.]

sit down, though they could not see how they were to be fed. *The men therefore sat down* by themselves *in rows*, which there was room to pass between, *by hundreds and by fifties*, in a long square containing an hundred in rank, and fifty in file:[h] and they were *about five thousand in number*, not to mention the women and children who were placed apart.

SECT. LXXVIII

Luke XI. 15.

MARK VI. 41. And when [JOHN, Jesus had taken the five loaves, and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and [JOHN, when he had given thanks, he] blessed [LUKE, them] and brake the loaves, and [JOHN, distributed] *them* to his disciples [LUKE, to set before the multitude] [JOHN, that were set down,] [and the disciples *gave them* to the multitude;] and [JOHN, likewise] the two fishes divided he among them all, [JOHN, as much as they would.] [MAT. XIV.—19. LUKE IX. 16. JOHN VI. 11.]

42 And they did all eat, and were filled. [MAT. XIV. 20.—LUKE IX. 17.—]

And Jesus, taking the five loaves and the two fishes, looked up to heaven with great reverence and affection, *and, having given thanks* to his heavenly Father for the bounties of his kind Providence, and the extraordinary instance of Divine favour now to be manifested, *he*, in a solemn manner, *blessed them*, commanding upon the provisions before him that singular blessing by which they were to be multiplied in the distribution; *and* then he *brake the loaves* in pieces, *and distributed them to his disciples that they might set* [*them*] *before the multitude, who were set down* upon the grass as he had ordered them: *and* accordingly *the disciples* [*gave them*] round *to* all *the multitude*, with believing hearts and unsparing hands: *and he likewise divided the two fishes among them all*, and gave them by the hands of his disciples to the whole company, supplying them with *as much as they would* take. *And* so wonderfully were the provisions increased by passing under his creating hand, that *they did all eat* of them till they had every one enough, *and were all* fully *satisfied.*

Mark VI. 41.

42

JOHN VI. 12. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, [MARK,

And, when they were all sufficiently *filled, he says to his disciples*, Let there be no waste made of any part of the divine bounties, but *gather up the broken pieces that remain, that* so *nothing may be lost.* The disciples *therefore*, in obedience to his word, went through the several ranks of the whole company, and picking up the pieces that were left, *they gathered them together, and filled* no less than *twelve baskets with the* very *fragments of the five barley loaves*,

John VI. 12.

13

[h] An hundred in rank, and fifty in file.] That this is the proper import, is abundantly proved by Mr. Pierce, in his Fifth Dissertation annexed to the Hebrews. This was the shortest and exactest way of ranging them, and reconciles Mark's account above, with Luke's, who only speaks of their sitting down by fifties. Thus disposed, they would wait more patiently till they were served in their turns; the number would appear at once, and they would see that Christ knew it.

SECT. LXXVIII

and of the two *fishes*, *which remained over and above to them that had eaten:* a quantity vastly larger than they had at first.

and of the fishes,] which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. [MAT. XIV —20 MARK VI. 43. LUKE IX.—17.]

Mat. XIV. 21. *And* yet *they who had eaten of the loaves* and fishes, (as by the disposition of the multitude in rows the number of them might be easily computed,) *were about five thousand men, besides women and children*, who sat by themselves, and might almost amount to an equal number.

MAT. XIV. 21. And they that had eaten [of the loaves,] were about five thousand men besides women and children. [MARK VI. 44.]

John VI. 14. *The men therefore* who were present upon this occasion, and were thus miraculously entertained, *having seen the miracle which Jesus wrought*, after all the preceding wonders of the day, were so mightily struck with it, that they *said*, *Truly this is the* great *Prophet who was to come into the world*, and has so long been impatiently expected by us; even the Messiah himself, whom God has appointed to rule, as well as to teach his people. (Compare Deut. xviii. 18; and see also 1 Mac. xiv. 41.) And, concluding that the same miraculous power could make itself victorious over all opposition, and easily could subsist and maintain an army[i] in the greatest extremity, they began to enter into measures of proclaiming his title to the kingdom of Israel, and fixing him on the throne of David his father.

JOHN VI. 14. Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.

15 *Jesus therefore*, *knowing* that they would quickly urge this proposal, and that their hearts were so much set upon it, *that they were ready to come and seize him by force to make him king*, was determined immediately to part with them, lest he should give umbrage to the jealousy of the Romans, and lead the people that followed him into inconvenience and ruin: he therefore *immediately obliged his disciples to get into the ship* in which they had come thither,[k]

15—When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, [MARK, straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go [before him] to the other

[i] Concluding that the same miraculous power could subsist and maintain an army.] It is certain, that an army of less than five thousand men might, under such a Leader, have accomplished the greatest events, and have obtained even universal empire, had he been pleased to exert his power to such purposes. They probably remembered, how vast an host had been defeated by Gideon with only *three hundred men* with their *trumpets* and *lamps*; (Judg. vii. 22.) not to mention Samson's slaying *a thousand* with a *jaw-bone*, (Judg. xv. 15.) and other extraordinary events of this kind recorded in the Old Testament. (See 2 Kings iii 21—24; 2 Chron. xx. 22—25; and compare Lev. xxvi. 8.) They also knew, that the whole body of the Jewish nation was then highly spirited with these sentiments; and might reasonably expect that legions of them would soon pour in, to the standards of such a Leader.

[k] *Obliged his disciples, &c.*] This phrase may intimate that they, who plainly ap-

side, unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.] [MAT. XIV. 22. MARK VI. 45.]

MARK VI. 46. And when he had sent them away, [and the evening was come,] he departed [JOHN, again,] [*and* went up [JOHN, himself alone] into a mountain to pray.] [MAT. XIV. 23. JOHN VI.—15.]

and to go before him to the other side of the creek, *to* the city of *Bethsaida*,[1] *while he dismissed the multitude*, who upon seeing his disciples go aboard, would be more easily prevailed upon to go away. *And when he had* accordingly *dismissed* the multitude, and sent *them* off as well as his disciples, *and the evening was* now *come*, *he again withdrew*, according to his frequent custom, [*and*] *ascended up by himself alone to a mountain* in those parts, *to pray* to his heavenly Father, in which delightful exercise he spent the greatest part of the night.

SECT. LXXVIII. Mark VI. 46.

IMPROVEMENT.

So evidently true is it, that *man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God!* (Mat. iv 4.) How wonderful did the *power of Christ* appear, in thus *multiplying the food!* and how amiable his *compassion*, in his affectionate *concern for the relief* of his necessitous followers! It is to be esteemed a great happiness, when the *ministers of the gospel* have it in their *power*, to assist men in their *temporal*, as well as *spiritual necessities*; and it is peculiarly incumbent upon *them*, thus *to do good and communicate*; *for with such sacrifices* from their hands *God is* peculiarly *well pleased*, and the *success* of their *ministry* may be greatly promoted by them. (Heb. xiii. 16.)

Mark VI. 41. Mat. XIV. 16.

The *disciples received* from the *hand of Christ* the *food* they *delivered to the people*: and so should *ministers* be concerned, that they may *receive from Christ*, what they *dispense to others* as the *bread of life*, and that *they* also at the same time may *live* upon it, as the *support* of their *own souls*. How great an honour is it to be employed as *stewards of the mysteries of God!* Let not immoderate *secular cares*, let not the desire of *worldly riches* or *greatness*, interrupt us in this blessed work! *Christ*

John VI. 11.

pear to have been too fond of secular views, were rather inclined to stay, and quitted the multitude with some reluctance, in what they thought so favourable a conjuncture. But it was certainly the highest prudence in Christ, considering what his purposes were, to order them away, and to dismiss them and the multitude, before any thing happened which could alarm or offend even the most jealous spies, who might perhaps herd among the crowd.

[1] *And to go before him to the other side* of the creek *to Bethsaida*.] It was observed before, (Luke ix. 10, p. 430.) that they were now in a desert place belonging to Bethsaida; which probably was divided from it by some bay or creek that run into the land; and Christ now only ordered his disciples to pass over this creek to the city of Bethsaida, where he might afterwards have joined them, when he had sent away the people. But in their passage thither, a great storm arose, and they were driven by a contrary wind into the midst of the sea towards Capernaum. This reconciles the place before us with the beginning of the next section, where, notwithstanding the direction Christ had given them *to go before him to Bethsaida*, we find them *going to Capernaum*, which lay on the *other side* of the lake. Compare note [1] page 430.

SECT. LXXVIII. *withdrew* from those who would have *made him king:* ill therefore does it become *his disciples* to pursue *earthly grandeur;* and most unworthy is it of *his ministers*, to act as if *his kingdom* were *of this world.* May we *learn in every state to be content!* Verse 12 (Phil. iv. 11.) In *want*, may we cheerfully *trust Providence!* In *plenty*, may we not wantonly *abuse it!* but learn, by his command of *gathering up the fragments* even of this *miraculous feast*, a wise *frugality* in the use of our enjoyments; *that nothing may be lost*, nor a *reserve* be wanting, by which the streams of *future liberality* may be fed!

Mat. XIV. 23. When the day had been thus employed, *Christ retired to a mountain to pray.* Thus must *secret devotion* attend our *public labours* for the instruction and salvation of men, if we would secure that *divine blessing*, without which, neither the most eloquent preaching, nor the most engaging and benevolent conduct, can command or promise success.

SECT. LXXIX.

As the disciples were upon the lake they are overtaken by a storm: and Christ comes to them, walking on the sea, and stills the tempest, Mat. XIV. 24, *to the end.* Mark VI. 47, *to the end.* John VI. 16—21.

JOHN VI. 16.

SECT. LXXIX. IT was before observed that, after the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, Christ ordered his disciples to depart, and go before him to Bethsaida; *and* accordingly, *when the evening was come, his disciples went down to the* John VI. 16. 17 *sea*-[*side;*] *And, having entered into the ship* which waited for them, and put off from land, they quickly met with a cross wind that changed their course, and were soon driven farther from the shore than they designed; so that, instead of getting to Bethsaida, *they were going to the other side of the sea towards Capernaum:*[a] *and*, night coming on, *it was now dark, and*

JOHN VI. 16. AND, when even was *now* come, his disciples went down unto the sea; [MARK VI. 47—]

17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea towards Capernaum: and it was now dark, [MARK, and the ship

[a] *Were going to the other side of the sea towards Capernaum.*] This exactly expresses what is said in the original; ηρχοντο περαν της θαλασσης εις Καπερναουμ: and I cannot but look upon it as an argument, that Bethsaida lay on the east side of the sea of Tiberias, (though most of our maps have placed it in a different situation; since Capernaum is allowed by all to have been situated on the western shore, and is here represented as lying on the opposite side to Bethsaida, from which they were driven over the sea to Capernaum. (Compare note[l] in the preceding page.) This situation of Bethsaida is likewise confirmed by Josephus, (Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 9, (al. 8.) § 1.) who calls it by the name of Julias; which Pliny also speaks of, as on the eastern side of the lake of Genesareth. See Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. v. cap. 15. and Lightfoot. Cent. Chorog. in Mat. cap. 93.

was in the midst of the sea:] and Jesus was not come unto them [MARK, *but was* alone on the land.] [MAT. XIV. 24.—MARK VI. 47.]

18 And the sea arose, by reason of a great wind that blew, [and the ship was tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary.] [MARK, unto them.] [MAT. XIV.—24. MARK VI. 48.]

19—So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, [in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus,] [MARK, saw them toiling in rowing, and cometh unto them walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.] [MAT. XIV.—25. MARK VI. 48.]

MAT. XIV. 26. And when the disciples saw him walk-

the ship was in the midst of the sea, they did not exactly know where. *Now Jesus was not yet come to them*,[b] [*but was*] still where they left him, by himself *alone on the land*, employed in secret devotion on the mountain to which he retired. SECT. LXXIX. John VI. 17.

In the mean time they were in circumstances of great danger *and* distress; for *the sea arose* in a very tempestuous manner, *by reason of a violent* storm of *wind which blew* hard upon it; *and the vessel was tossed by the* swelling *waves*; *for the wind was contrary to them*, and had driven them far out of their intended course. 18

So when they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs, or something more than a league,[c] *in the* beginning of the *fourth watch of the night*, or about three o'clock in the morning,[d] *Jesus*, who knew the distress they were in, *perceiving* that *they were weary with rowing*, and in vain attempted to weather the storm, *came to them walking on the sea*,[e] by his miraculous power rendering his own body lighter than usual, or strengthening the waves to bear it: *and*, farther to exercise their faith and courage, he seemed, at first, as if he *would have passed by them*. *And when the disciples*, by that little light which the reflection of the moon on the water afforded them,[f] *saw him walking* 19 Mat. XIV. 26.

[b] *Now Jesus was not yet come to them.*] It is a great imperfection of our language, that we have no proper copulative particle, but [and;] which is here so much the more unhappy, as, in laying together the whole narration of the evangelists, the use of that particle is much more frequent than it would have been in any single one. I chuse therefore here, and in some other places, to change it for the word [*now*,] which in this connection signifies almost, if not entirely, the same thing.

[c] *When they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty furlongs.*] Probably, when they found the wind so violent, they were afraid of being shipwrecked if they came near the shore: and therefore having perhaps sailed a while before the wind, they now rowed out to sea: for, as they must have been several hours at sea, one can hardly imagine, that with so brisk a gale they made no more way in all this time than a little above a league; unless we impute it to their having laboured all they could to avoid crossing the sea, and to get to Bethsaida.

[d] *In the fourth watch of the night.*] The Jewish night was divided into four watches, each containing about *three* of our *hours*, especially so near the equinox. The first began at six in the evening, the second at nine, the third at midnight, and the fourth at three in the morning. (See Godwin's Moses and Aaron, book iii. chap. 1.) F. Calmet (in the word hours,) thinks they learned this division from the Romans. See Veget. de Re militari, lib. iii. cap. 8. and Pitisc. Lexic. in Vigil.

[e] *Walking on the sea.*] This was thought so impracticable, that the picture of two feet walking on the sea, was an Egyptian hieroglyphic for an *impossible thing*. And in the scripture it is mentioned as the prerogative of God, that he *alone treadeth upon the waves of the sea*, Job ix. 8.

[f] *By that little light, &c.*] It is well known, that it is never *entirely dark on*

SECT. LXXIX.

on the sea, and passing near the ship, not perfectly discerning who it was, *they were* much *terrified, saying, It is* certainly *an apparition* for no human body could thus be supported by the water: *and they* had such a dread of what might be the consequence, that they *cried out* aloud *for fear. For they all saw him; and,* notwithstanding the miraculous power that he had lately given them over evil spirits, (Mat. x. 1, p. 407.) yet *were* they greatly *troubled. And* therefore, to deliver them from that anxiety, *he immediately spoke to them, and said, Take courage:* for *it is I,* your Lord and Master: *be not afraid* of me, who am your friend; nor of the violent tempest, which cannot hurt you while under my protection.

Mat. XIV. 26.

Mark VI. 50.

Then, as they knew his voice, they presently began to lay aside their fears: *and Peter,* whose natural temper was remarkably warm and forward, immediately *answering, said unto him, Lord if it* indeed *be thou* who art walking on the sea, as I now apprehend it is, I am so far from being afraid of the tempest in thy presence, while I continue in the ship, that I am willing thou shouldest, if thou pleasest, *command me to come to thee* even *upon the water,* and I will immediately venture to do it. *And* Jesus, that *he* thus might exercise his faith, and by convincing him of his weakness, might give a check at the same time to his excessive confidence, complied with his proposal, and *said* to him, If thou hast faith and courage to attempt it, *come* then, and make the trial: *and Peter,* being now assured it was indeed his Master, *came down from the ship, and* fully satisfied that he was able to uphold and bear him up, *walked on the water* for a while, *to come unto Jesus*: *But* soon *perceiving* that *the wind* was very *strong*, and the sea raging with great violence, *he was afraid* of being lost; *and* his faith failing him, *he* presently *began to sink,*[s] *and*

Mat. XIV. 28.

29

30

ing on the sea, [John, and drawing nigh unto the ship] they were [John, afraid] saying, It *is* a spirit; and they cried out for fear. [Mark VI. 49. John VI.—19.]

Mark VI. 50. For they all saw him, and were troubled. And immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer, It is I, be not afraid. [Mat. XIV. 27. John VI. 20.]

Mat. XIV. 28. And Peter answered him, and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said Come. And, when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

30 But, when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid: and beginning to

the water; not to urge that the moon might perhaps now be in the last quarter, as it must have been, if this was about three weeks before the passover.

[s] *He began to sink.*] He probably could swim, as most fishermen can; (compare John xxi. 7.) and perhaps he might venture on the attempt he now made, with some secret dependence on his art, which God, for wise reasons, suffered to fail him. The word καταποντίζεσθαι is very expressive, and may intimate that he felt himself *sinking with such a weight* that he had no hope of recovering himself, and expected nothing but that he should go directly to the bottom of the sea.

sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

cried out in a great consternation of spirit, SECT. *saying, Lord, save me,* or I shall be swallowed LXXIX. up in a moment. *And immediately Jesus* Mat. *stretching out his hand, laid hold on him; and,* XIV. 31. to remind him of his unbelief, *said to him, O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt* of my protection, when I was so near; when thou hadst my commission to make the trial, and hadst in part experienced my power in supporting thee thus far on the waves?

Mark VI. 51. And he went up unto them into the ship; [and when they were come into the ship,] [John, they willingly received him,] and the wind ceased: [John, and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went:] and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered. [Mat. XIV. 32. John VI. 21.]

52 For they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves, for their heart was hardened.

And, taking Peter with him, *he ascended to* Mark *them into the bark;*[h] *and, when they were come* VI. 51. *aboard, they* that were there *received him with* the utmost *pleasure,* as the great pledge of their common safety. *And* they quickly found the happy effects of his presence: for all the fury of *the wind* now *ceased* at once; *and,* what was yet more surprising, *the ship was immediately at the* point of *land to which they were going. And they were* all *exceedingly amazed in themselves, and astonished beyond measure,*[i] as if they had never before seen any exertion of his miraculous power. *For their heart was hardened,* 52 *and* their mind so insensible, that *they considered not the* yet more wonderful and glorious [*miracle of the*] *loaves,* which but the day before they had seen multiplied in so extraordinary a manner as to display even a creating power.[k]

Mat. XIV. 33. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying,

Then they that were about him, even all *that* Mat. *were in the ship, came and worshipped him,* as XIV. 33. in a rapture of wonder, devotion, and joy, fal-

[h] *Into the bark.*] Though the evangelists generally use the word πλοιον, which signifies *any vessel* in which men sail on the sea, I have sometimes varied it a little, in order to prevent that ill effect which the repetition of it so frequently as it occurs would have on the ear in reading; and have here called it *a bark,* that it may not be imagined like our *modern ships.* Accordingly John calls it πλοιαριον, or *a little vessel;* chap. vi. 22. Compare John xxi. 3, 8.

[i] *Exceedingly amazed — and astonished beyond measure.*] The words λιαν εκ περισσου εξισταντο, και εθαυμαζον, are too emphatical to be exactly rendered; but this is plainly the sense of them: and the accurate reader will observe that I suppose the words λιαν εκ περισσου to be equally connected with εθαυμαζον and εξισταντο.

[k] As to display even a creating power.] Had not this been done, it is hard to imagine how twelve baskets full of fragments could have been taken up: it was therefore in itself, (as the evangelist plainly intimates,) a more certain and glorious miracle than the ceasing of the wind immediately on his coming into the ship. Their speedy landing after this must also have increased their astonishment.— Considering this instance, and that of Philip, Acts viii. 39, 40, we have room to admire the condescension of Christ, in submitting so often to the fatigues of journeying on foot from one place to another, when he could at pleasure have commanded angels to transport him. With equal ease he could have walked ashore from the waves of the sea, but with a most edifying modesty he avoided the ostentation of it.

SECT. LXXIX.

ling down at his feet with the utmost reverence, and *saying*, We are now convinced that *thou art indeed the Son of God*, and hast an unlimited power over the whole creation.

Mat. XIV. 33.

ing. Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

34 *And when they had* thus *passed over* the lake, *they came to* a part of *the land of Gennesareth, and put to shore* not far from Capernaum,[1] to which, it was observed before (p. 438,) their course was tending. *And when they came out of the vessel*, as it was a place where Jesus had often been, *they* that were present when he landed, *immediately knew him*; and, though it was so early in the morning, the news of his arrival quickly spread through all the neighbouring parts. For they were ready to inform each other of his coming; *and the men of that place, who knew him*, no sooner were apprised of his arrival, but presently they *sent out, and ran to* every place in *all that country round about*, to give notice to their neighbours that Jesus was there, and that they now again should have the privilege of his preaching and working miracles among them: *and they began to carry about the sick in beds, and brought unto him all that were diseased, to the place where they heard he was.* 56 *And* this was indeed the general custom *wherever he* came: as soon as he was *entered into* any *towns, or cities, or country* [*villages*,] *they laid sick in the* most *public streets*, through which they expected he would pass, *and entreated him that they might at least touch the fringe of his garment*, *and as many as touched him*, believing in his power and his readiness to heal them, *were perfectly recovered*, how extreme soever their illness had been.

Mark VI. 54.

34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, [and drew to the shore. MARK VI. 53.]

MARK VI. 54. And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him.

55 [And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out,] and ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, [and brought unto him all that were diseased,] where they heard he was. [MAT. XIV. 35.]

56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch, if it were but the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were made [perfectly] whole. [MAT. XIV. 36.]

IMPROVEMENT.

John VI. 17, 18.

THUS it still pleases *Christ* to exercise the *faith* of his people, that he may strengthen their dependence on him, and demonstrate at once his compassion and his power. Thus are *storms* permitted oftentimes to rise around them, and for a while they

[1] *To the land of Gennesareth, and put to shore* not far from Capernaum.] The *land of Gennesareth* was a large tract of ground on the western shore of the lake, in part of which Capernaum appears from hence to have been situated. For though Matthew and Mark only speak of their coming to the land of Gennesareth, and putting to shore there, it is plain, from John's account, that Jesus at his landing came to Capernaum: for it was there the people found him that followed him in the morning from the other side of the sea. Compare John vi 22, 24, 25, in the next section, and ver. 59, sect. lxxxii.

are *left in darkness*, and are *tossed with tempests:* but he is *near* at hand, even when they think him at the remotest distance; and when he seems to be *passing by them*, as regardless of their danger and distress, he has designs of grace and mercy to them, and acts in such a way on purpose to quicken and excite them to a greater earnestness and fervour in their applications to him. Happy would the *Christian* be, could he always *discern his Lord*, and always conceive of him *aright!* but alas, how often does he appear to the disordered mind as the object of *terror* rather than of *confidence!* and, in a day of *darkness*, while he may seem to treat his suffering people with neglect, instead of seeking him with a more earnest importunity, how are they ready to be overwhelmed with *fears*, and to conclude *he has forgotten them!* SECT. LXXIX. Mark VI. 48. 49

At the *command* of *Jesus*, *Peter* ventured to *go to him on the sea*. And through what storms and dangers may we not safely venture, if we are sure that *our Lord calls us!* Yet the *rebuke* which he suffered may warn us not rashly to throw ourselves on *unnecessary trials*, lest our excess of *confidence* end in *fear* and *disgrace*. Modesty and caution will adorn our other virtues, and render us amiable in the eyes of the humble *Jesus*. Mat. XIV. 28, 29. 30

In how many circumstances of life does the *Christian* appear to his own imagination like *Peter beginning to sink* in the waves! But in the time of our distress, like him, let us *cry to Jesus for help;* and, while we are lifting up the hands of *faith* and *prayer*, we may humbly hope that *Christ* will *stretch forth his* omnipotent *arm* for our rescue. Let every experience of this kind, and all the seasonable aid he is from time to time imparting to us, establish our *dependence* on him, and enforce our *obedience* to him, as the *Son of God*. May divine grace deliver us from that *hardness of heart*, that stupidity and insensibility of mind, which sometimes remains *unconvinced* in the midst of evidence, and *unaffected*, under the most moving illustrations of his *abilities* and *willingness* to help us! 30, 31 32, 33 Mark VI. 52.

SECT. LXXX.

Our Lord, being followed by the multitude to Capernaum, cautions them against those worldly views with which they sought him, and declares himself to be the bread of life. John VI. 22—40.

JOHN VI. 22.

THE day following, when the people

JOHN VI. 22.

IN the mean time, while Jesus was thus charitably employed in healing those who were brought to him in the places near the shore, from whence he soon went forwards to Caper-

SECT. LXXX. John VI. 22.

naum, *on the morrow* after he had fed the five thousand, great search was made for him by those whom he had sent away the night before: for they were so affected with the miraculous entertainment he had given them, that there were many of *the multitude, who,* though they might withdraw to a little distance on his dismissing the assembly (Mark vi. 46, p. 437), yet still *continued on the other side of the sea* that night, hoping to have another interview with him in the morning; and, *as they saw there was no other vessel there* on the coast, *but that one into which his disciples entered* when they departed in the evening, *and* knew *that Jesus did not go with his disciples into the vessel, but that his desciples went away* by themselves, leaving him there to spend the night *alone,* they made no question of his being still on that side
23 of the sea. But in the morning they perceived that he was gone, and presently determined to go after him: and, *though* there were no vessels there the night before, yet were they quickly furnished with an opportunity of following him; for *there came other vessels* very early *from Tiberias,* and put to shore *nigh to the place where they had eat* the *bread* and fishes *after the Lord had given thanks,* and commanded such a miraculous blessing upon them.
24 *The multitude therefore, when they saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there* on that side, *went also themselves* immediately *aboard the vessels* that were now arrived, as many of them as could, *and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus* with all the appearance of the
25 most eager importunity. *And, when they had found him on the other side of the sea,* in the synagogue of Capernaum, (see ver. 59), as soon as the worship was over, and before they quitted the place, *they* accosted him with the greatest respect, and *said unto him, Rabbi, when* and how *camest thou hither?* for, as thou didst not go last night with thy disciples, we expected to have found thee on the other side of the sea, and know not when thou couldst come, or what imaginable way thou couldst have of crossing the water.

which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone:

23 (Howbeit, there came other boats from Tiberias, nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

SECT. LXXX.

John VI. 26.

26 Jesus answered them, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

But *Jesus*, modestly waving the recital of those extraordinary circumstances which attended his passage, diverted the discourse to a yet more important and edifying subject; and, knowing, by an intimate penetration of their very hearts, that they were governed only by carnal motives in this attendance upon him, humble and zealous as it might appear, he *answered them* with great solemnity, *and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, You seek me, not because you have seen the miracles* that I perform, and are convinced by them that I am a Divine Teacher, *but because you have eaten of the loaves and were filled*, and have from thence concluded that you shall make yourselves rich and great by following me. But these are mean and may be fatal views; and I would form you to nobler and wiser sentiments: *labour not* therefore so much *to procure the meat which perishes*, and can only support the mortal part of your nature;[a] *but* rather be solicitous to obtain Divine knowledge and instruction, *that meat which endures to eternal life*, and will nourish your souls to endless felicity: this is that *which the Son of man will* most readily *give you; for him has God the* great *Father* of all, in mercy to his creatures, sent into the world for this blessed purpose, and *sealed* with this miraculous power, which he daily displays,[b] as an authentic proof of his divine mission.

27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed.

27

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

They therefore, that they might appear willing to receive his instructions as well as his bounties, *said unto him, What must we do, that we may so work the works of God* as to secure his favour to eternal life?

28

29 Jesus answered and said unto them,

Jesus replying said unto them, Think not of

29

[a] *Labour not to procure the meat which perishes.*] Hardly any one can imagine our Lord intended to prohibit men's labouring for the subsistence of their bodies. Most of those who attended him probably had no other support than their labour: but his intent was plainly to declare how much the interest of the soul was to be preferred to that of the body. (See note [n] on Mat. xii. 7, p. 283.) Εργαζεσθαι βρωσιν is to labour to procure meat.

[b] *Him has God the Father sealed.*] Some have ingeniously conjectured that this may allude to a custom which princes might have when making grand entertainments, to give a commission under their hand and seal, or perhaps to deliver a signet, to those whom they appointed to preside in the management of them: (see Elsner, Vol. I p. 311, 312.) Though it may possibly be sufficient to say that to seal is a general phrase for authorising by proper credentials, whatever the purpose be for which they are given; or for marking a person out, as wholly devoted to the service of him whose seal he bears.

SECT. LXXX. John VI. 29.

meriting the Divine favour by any thing you can do yourselves; for *this is the* great *work of God*, which he requires above all things, and which he will be ready to accept, *that you believe on him whom he has sent*, crediting his message, and venturing your souls upon his power and grace.

This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

30 *Then*, though they just before had seen such an astonishing miracle, and several of them lived in the neighbourhood of Capernaum, where he had so long multiplied those wonders, yet some of them were so unreasonable, that *they said to him* after all the miracles that he had wrought,[e] if thou wouldest have us to regard thee as invested with so high a character, that far exceeds whatever has been claimed by any one before, thou shouldest produce some signal evidence of a superior kind to all that has been done by others: *what sign therefore shewest thou* from heaven, *that we may see* [*it*,] *and believe thee? What dost thou perform* more than others, or even equal to what Moses did, that we should treat thee with so extraordinary a

30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then that we may see, and believe thee? What dost thou work?

31 regard? Thou didst indeed yesterday feed some thousands of us in an extraordinary manner with barley bread: but *our fathers*, who were incomparably more numerous than that assembly, *did*, under the conduct of Moses, *eat manna*, a far more delicious food, *in the wilderness*, even forty years; *as it is written* (Psal. lxxviii. 24,) "*He gave them bread from heaven to eat*;" and, when thou shalt give us as glorious a demonstration of thy mission, we will pay thee an equal regard.

31 Our Fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

32 *Then Jesus said to them* again, *Verily, verily, I say*, and affirm it *unto you*, how strange soever it may appear, *Moses gave you not that bread from heaven* which best deserves so honourable a name; *but* this you are supplied with by *my Father*, who, sending me among you as your Instructor and Redeemer, *giveth you* now *the true* and most excellent *bread from heaven*.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

[e] Some of them were so unreasonable that *they said to him*.] The sentiments of those that speak to Christ in this discourse are so various (compare ver. 34, 41, 42,) and the evangelist so expressly declares that there was a debate between some and others of them, ver. 52, that I think it would be wrong to imagine these to have been the perverse and ungrateful sentiments of the whole multitude, who had followed him with so much eagerness from place to place for several days.

SECT. LXXX. John VI. 33.

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

For that is indeed *the bread of God*, and may most justly claim the title, *which descendeth from* the highest *heaven*,[d] whereas manna fell only from the clouds or the inferior regions of the air; *and* which *giveth life* and true happiness *to the* whole *world* of believers, whereas what Moses gave only relieved the temporal necessities of one particular nation.

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

They therefore, when they heard him speaking of so excellent a gift, were presently desirous to obtain it; and, though as yet they did not fully understand what he intended by this bread, some of the wiser and better part of them[e] had such a notion of its excellence, that they *said to him, Lord, give us evermore this bread*, on which our life depends, and let us always live upon this heavenly manna. 34

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Then, for a farther explication of this important truth, *Jesus said to them, I am* indeed *the bread of life*;[f] nor is bread so necessary to the support of your bodies, as a believing regard to me is to the life of your souls; *he* therefore *that comes to me*, and makes his application aright, *shall never hunger; and he that* truly *believes in me shall never thirst* any more; but may depend upon it that he shall find the most restless desires of his soul satisfied, and, conscious of the noblest refreshment and nourishment already received, shall grow up to a state of everlasting complete satisfaction and enjoyment. 35

36 But I said unto

But, valuable as these blessings of my grace are, you are little disposed to pursue and 36

[d] *That is* indeed *the bread of God, which descendeth from heaven*, &c.] It is necessary to translate ὁ καταβαινων &c. in this ambiguous manner, that we may not supersede the explication which our Lord gives in ver. 35. Dr. Clarke has justly observed this; and it is of great importance to apply it to many other passages, where too clear and full a paraphrase of what is explained professedly in some subsequent verses would only serve to flatten the whole.—Compare note [c] on Mark iv. 3. sect. lxv.

[e] Some of the wiser and better part of them.] See before, note [c] on ver. 30.

[f] *I am the bread of life.*] Though indeed it is very usual with the sacred writers to represent divine instructions as the food of the soul, and to compare them to delicious and nourishing diet; (see Psal. xix. 10. cxix. 103; Prov. ix. 5; Job xxiii. 12; Jer. xv. 16; and Heb. v. 12, 14.) yet I can recollect no instance in which the Instructor himself, as such, is called food, or any are said to eat him; much less in which, as below, they are exhorted to eat his flesh, and drink his blood: so that Dr. Clarke's laboured and ingenious criticism on this passage (in the xiith of his Seventeen Sermons) is far from being satisfactory; and, however clear it may be of any such design, I fear it has misled many to a neglect of that great doctrine of Christ's atonement, to which there seems in this context so express a reference.

SECT. LXXX. John VI. 36.

accept them: for *I have* already *told you* (ver. 26,) *that you have even seen me*, and beheld the miracles that I perform; *and* yet are so perverse and obstinate that you *believe not* [*in me*,] and will not be prevailed upon to come to me for life and happiness. Nevertheless, though you reject me, yet I shall not be universally rejected, nor shall the purposes of my mission be entirely frustrated; for *all that the Father* has graciously chosen to himself, and whom he *giveth* to *me* in consequence of a peculiar covenant, to be sanctified and saved by me, *will* certainly at length *come to me*;[g] *and*, on the other hand, if any of you find yourselves disposed to such a believing application to me, you have no reason to be terrified with any suspicion that you are excluded from hope by any secret transactions between the Father and me; for I declare it to you as an universal truth, and perfectly consistent with the former, That *him that cometh to me*, whoever he may be, *I will by no means cast out*,[h] nor shall he be rejected or refused on any consideration whatsoever. And you have sufficient reason to believe this, *because I came down from heaven* into this lower world, *not to do my own will*, or to seek any separate interest of my own, *but* to do *the will* and to seek the glory *of him that*

you, that ye also have seen me, and believe not.

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own

[g] *All that the Father giveth me will come to me.*] I have given that sense of this celebrated and important text, which on serious, and I hope impartial consideration, appeared to me most agreeable to the words themselves, and to the general tenor of scripture. (See especially John xvii. 2, 6, 9, 11, 24.) Mr. Le Clerc's gloss upon them appears to me unnatural, and Dr. Whitby's frivolous. —I do not mean in these notes to enter largely into any kind of controversy; but dare not suppress or disguise what I am in my conscience persuaded to be the sense of scripture, merely because it is not agreeable to the general taste of the age to take it in that view.—I render ηξει will come, because the word does not necessarily imply any thing more than the certainty of the event; and I would not lead any, merely in dependence on a translation, to build a weak argument on the word *SHALL*, which it is well known has sometimes been done.

[h] *And him that cometh to me*, whoever he may be, *I will by no means cast out.*] To limit this latter clause by the former is not only missing but contradicting the design of Christ, and destroying the wise and beautiful turn of this text; than which I think few more important for stating some great doctrines of the gospel which have unhappily been the foundation of much eager and uncharitable dispute.—The expression ου μη εκβαλω εξω, is extremely beautiful and emphatical. It represents an humble supplicant as coming into the house of some prince or other great person to cast himself at his feet, and to commit himself to his protection and care. He might fear his petition might be rejected, and he thrust out of doors: but our Lord assures him to the contrary. His house and heart are large enough to receive, shelter, and supply, all the indigent and distressed. God only knows how many thousand souls have been sensibly supported by these gracious words.

will, but the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, That of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, That every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

sent me. And this is the will of the Father who sent me, That of all the whole body of my people *whom he has given me*, and committed to my care, *I should lose none*, not even the meanest member, *but should* assuredly *raise it up at the last day* in complete glory and happiness. Or, to express it in more general terms, *even this is the will of him that sent me, That every one who views the Son with an attentive eye*,[1] *and*, in consequence of that view, cordially *believes on him*, receiving him by faith, and trusting in him as an all-sufficient Saviour, *should have eternal life; and I will* accordingly *raise him up at the last day*, and make him completely happy, both in soul and body, in the enjoyment of a glorious immortality: nor are there any secret purposes and decrees of God inconsistent with the sincerity of such a declaration.

SECT. LXXX.

John VI. 39.

40

IMPROVEMENT.

How gratefully should we acknowledge the Divine goodness, in giving *this true bread from heaven, for the life of the world*; and how solicitous should we be, that by a true *faith* we may *feed upon it!* In the midst of so many ensnaring circumstances, let us be strictly watchful over ourselves, that the vigour of our pursuits and *labours* may not be laid out on *the meat which perishes*, to the forgetfulness of *that which endures to eternal life:* but acknowledging those authentic *seals*, by which *Christ* is marked out to that important trust, may we apply to him as *sent of God the Father*, to be the Author of eternal salvation, and come to him to be partakers of his saving benefits!

Verse 32,33

27

40

It must surely grieve us, to observe the neglect and contempt with which he is too frequently treated; but it may comfort us, that there yet remains *a remnant according to the election of grace.* (Rom. xi. 5.) *All that the Father giveth him, will come to him;* and blessed be God, that this appears to be no inconsiderable number. *Secret things belong to the Lord our God;* (Deut. xxix. 29.) let it therefore be our care to *make* first *our calling*, and then, by a happy consequence, *our election sure.* (2 Pet. i. 10.) Whatever discouragements may arise in our way, may we fly to cast ourselves at the feet of *Christ;* and then we may be sure he will never on any consideration *cast us*

37

[1] *Every one who views the Son with an attentive eye.*] Thus the words πας ὁ θεωρων τον υἱον should undoubtedly be rendered. There are many other places where θεωρειν signifies to view with attention. Compare Mat. xxvii. 55; Luke x. 18; xxi. 6; John xvii. 24; Acts iii. 12; and Heb. vii. 4.

SECT. LXXX. *out*, but will receive us in the arms of his almighty compassion, and, having sheltered and maintained us in his house on earth, will at length conduct us safely to the presence of his glory, and to the blessed abodes of complete felicity!

SECT. LXXXI.

Christ having represented himself as the bread of life, enlarges on the necessity and benefit of feeding upon him as such. John VI. 41—58.

JOHN VI. 41.

SECT. LXXXI. John VI. 41. THUS did our Lord declare himself to be the bread of life, which God had given them from heaven; but *then*, as this agreed not with their worldly views, *the Jews who were about him* were so far from receiving the declaration with a becoming regard, that, on the contrary, they took offence and *murmured* at it, *because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven*, to feed and support the divine life in
42 the soul. *And*, being strangers to the doctrine of his miraculous conception and divine nature; *they said* among themselves, *Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we have* long *known*,[a] having lived many years in the neighbourhood? *How* is it *therefore*, that this man should claim so high a character? or how *does he* presume to *say, that I came down from heaven?*
43 *Jesus therefore*, who well knew all their secret suspicions, how artfully soever they might be whispered and concealed, *replied and said unto them, Do not murmur among yourselves* on this occasion; but rather set yourselves seriously to reflect on your present state, and your true in-
44 terest. I know indeed that your prejudices against me are strong, and without the influences of divine grace will prove invincible and fatal: for such is the moral blindness and de-

JOHN VI. 41.
THE Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

42 And they said, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

[a] *Whose father and mother we have* long *known.*] Dr. Wells argues from hence, that Joseph was yet alive; but it may signify only, *We know who his father and mother were.* It is at least certain, that Joseph died quickly after; for if he had been living, Jesus, when dying on the cross, would not have consigned his mother to the care of John. John xix. 26, 27. (Compare note [b] on John ii. 1, sect. xxiii. and Mat. xiii. 55, p. 403.)

SECT. LXXXI.

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

generacy of human nature, that *no man can* by a saving faith *come* and make his application *to me, unless the Father who has sent me draw him* by the sweet, but powerful influences of his Holy Spirit on the heart;[b] *and [then] I will raise him up at the last day*, and finally make him a partaker of the complete felicity and blessedness of my kingdom. For so *it is written* *in the prophets*, (Isa. liv. 13, and Jer. xxxi. 34.) "*And they shall all be taught by God*,[c] by "divine influences on their minds;" and there are many other passages much to the same purpose: (see Isa. ii. 2—5; Mic. iv. 1—4, &c.) *Therefore every one who has* not only been instructed in the true nature of God, but has both *heard and learned from the Father* himself, by virtue of these internal and efficacious teachings of his grace, *comes unto me*, and cordially receives me under the character I profess. I speak this of an inward Divine teaching, and *not* to insinuate *that any one* on earth *has seen the Father*, and been taught by him, as one man is by the converse of another: no one has enjoyed such an honour, *except* it be *he who is* come to men as the great Ambassador *from God: He* indeed being statedly resident with him, and inseparably united to him, *has seen the Father*, and conversed with him to a degree of intimacy and endearment which no creature can pretend to have known. In virtue then of those ample instructions I have received from him, *verily, verily, I say unto you*, and testify

John VI. 44.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

45

46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God: he hath seen the Father.

46

47 Verily, verily,

47

[b] *Unless the Father who hath sent me draw him.*] The sense I have given in the paraphrase seems so natural, from a view of the words themselves, and of their connection, as well as so agreeable to the whole tenor of scripture, that I wonder so many learned and ingenious men should have laboured to disguise it by other interpretations. Dr. Clarke explains it as an intimation, that to be well grounded in natural religion, is the best preparative for receiving the Christian religion. But this, though an apparent truth, falls far short of the sense of the passage; especially considering what is afterwards said of being taught by God, and not merely of him, ver. 45.—The doctor observes here, that when in scripture one person is said to draw another, the word may signify either the *action* of the *person* said to *draw*, or of the *person drawn*; and unhappily produces, John xii. 32; Jer. xxxi. 3; and Hos. xi. 4; all which lie strongly against such a sense. The truth is, God's drawing does not exclude our consent to follow, and our activity in doing it; but it always includes a Divine agency. Compare Judg. iv. 7. (See Dr. Clarke's Sermons, Vol. III. No. 3.)

[c] *Taught by God*; διδακτοι θεου.] The word properly signifies, they shall be the *disciples* or *scholars of God*, who shall humbly sit down, as it were, at his feet, and receive instructions from him. This, in the latter text referred to in the paraphrase, is expressly distinguished from human instructions relating to the nature of God. Compare 1 Thess. iv. 9.

SECT. LXXXI.

it as a most sure and important truth, that this is the only method of salvation; and *that* it is *he*, and he alone, *who believes* in me, and reposes himself *on me*, that *hath everlasting life*. Remember therefore, that it is in this respect I tell you, *I am the bread of life;* not only as a Teacher of truth, and a Messenger from God to men; but as the Great Redeemer, whom you must receive into your hearts, and on whom you must, as it were, feed by faith, if you indeed would have your life to be supported and secured.

John VI. 47. 48

I say unto you, He that believeth on me, hath everlasting life.

48 I am that bread of life.

49 And those who thus regard me will receive far more important blessings than Moses, of whom you have now been boasting, could possibly give. For though indeed *your fathers*, under the conduct of that illustrious prophet, *did eat manna in the wilderness*, yet it was not sufficient to maintain their life, *and* they *are* long since *dead:* [*But*] *this*, of which I now speak, *is the* true *bread which cometh down from heaven*, and is of such a nature, *that any one may eat of it, and* have his life so nourished and supported by it, that he shall *not die*, but be assuredly delivered from the condemnation and ruin, to which the breach of God's righteous law has subjected every offender.

49 50

49 Your Fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead:

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 Thus then I plainly tell you how incredible soever you may think it, That *I who came down from heaven* for this gracious purpose, *am the living bread*, or a principle of divine life and eternal happiness to all who shall faithfully receive me: so that *if any one eat of this bread, in* spite of death and the grave, *he shall live for ever. And*, that you may more distinctly conceive this important truth, and see the propriety of this language, I add, That *the bread which I will give* to such a one, *is my* own *flesh, which I will give* as an atoning sacrifice *for the* forfeited *life of the* whole *world* of Jews and Gentiles,[d] of which every true believer shall partake.

51

51 I am the living bread, which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

[d] *Which I will give for the life of the whole world*, &c.] There seems to be a beautiful gradation in this verse, compared with verse 31. They had insinuated that, *feeding a few thousands with the five loaves* was an inconsiderable thing, when compared with what Moses did, when he fed the whole camp of Israel; but our Lord declares the purposes of his grace and bounty to be far more extensive, as reaching the whole world, and giving life, immortal life, to all that should believe in him.

52 The Jews therefore strove amongst themselves, saying, How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat?

But *the Jews*, whose stupidity often occasioned them to mistake, and whose perverseness led them to wrest his words, did not, or would not, understand him; and *therefore contended with each other*, the generality of them *saying*,[e] as if what he had said was to be taken in a literal sense, *How can this man* possibly *give us* [*his*] *flesh to eat?* What a monstrous and unintelligible doctrine is this?

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Then Jesus replied in the same figurative language he had used before, and, without condescending to any farther explication, *said to them*, However you may censure it as unintelligible and absurd, yet *verily, verily, I say unto you*, There is no truth more certain in itself, and more important to you: for *unless*, by a cordial dependence on the atonement I shall make, and by the powerful influences of divine grace upon your hearts, *you eat*, as it were, *the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood*,[f] *you have no* principle of spiritual *life in you*, and can have no claim to eternal happiness. For this is so important a part of faith in me, that, to declare the necessity of it, I may say (with such an alteration of my former words, ver. 40,) *He* alone, *that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, hath eternal life; and I will* most assuredly *raise him up at the last day*, and shew by his complete deliverance, how just a confidence he has reposed in me, amidst all the contempt with which you treat me. *For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed*;[g] and nothing deserves the name so well, as nothing is

53

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

54

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

55

[e] The generality of them *saying*.] Had this been the language of all, there could have been no contention between them, which yet is expressly asserted.

[f] *Eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood*.] This phrase naturally expresses a lively and habitual regard to Christ as the great support of the spiritual life. The mention of his blood, naturally leads to the thought of his atonement, as we are elsewhere told, *we have redemption through his blood*, (Eph. i. 7.) and *boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*. (Heb. x. 19.) The sacrament of the eucharist is plainly intended to affect our minds with a sense of these important truths, and our Lord might probably think of that intended institution, while he spoke: but as this was a future thing, and utterly unknown to his hearers, it seems to me unwarrantable to interpret this text as chiefly referring to that ordinance; and nothing can be more precarious, than many consequences, which have been drawn from it in that view, though some of them be authorised by very great names.

[g] *My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed*.] It might more literally be rendered, *is truly meat, and is truly drink*; but the sense in which the word [*indeed*] is often used, gives a kind of paraphrase on the words. Just in this sense, *the true light*, is the *most excellent light*; (John i. 9.) *the true vine*, is the *most noble vine*; (John xv. 1.) and *the*

SECT. LXXXI.

worthy of being called life in comparison of that which is hereby supported. For this feeding upon me is such, that *he who* thus *eats my* John VI. 56. *flesh, and drinks my blood, abides in me* by an intimate and inseparable union, *and I* abide *in him*[h] by the unalienable tokens of my favour and love to nourish the divine life in his soul:

57 I say by the unalienable tokens of it; for *as the living Father*, the great source of life, *has sent me* into the world, *and I live by* the protection and care of *the Father*,[i] who is continually dwelling in me, and communicating of his Spirit in the richest abundance to me; *so he that* thus *eateth me, even he shall live by me*, through the Spirit which I will also communicate to him.

58 And if you attend to these important hints that I have given, you may in general know what I meant, by saying as I have done, *This is the bread that came down from heaven*; and by adding, (ver. 49, 50.) that it is *not* in this case, *as* it was with *your fathers*, who *did eat manna* in the wilderness, *and* yet *are dead*,[k] without having found any efficacy in it to communicate a spiritual, or secure an eternal life; [*but*] *he that eats this bread, shall live for ever.*

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this bread, shall live for ever.

true bread, is the *most excellent and nourishing bread*. See above, ver. 32.

[h] *Abides in me, and I in him.*] After these words, the Cambridge manuscript, and one of Stephens's, add, *As the Father is in me, and I in the Father, verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye receive the body of the Son of man as the bread of life, ye have no life in you.* Dr. Mill (in his notes here,) seems to approve the addition; but I think Dr. Whitby has so fully proved it to be spurious, that I content myself with referring the reader to him, (see his Examen Milli, p. 49.) and to Wolfius on this text. (Cur. Philo. Vol. I. p. 865. 866.)

[i] *I live by the protection and care of the Father.*] The human and derived nature of Christ had no doubt the same dependence on the providence and influence of God, that other creatures have: and though Christ as Mediator has life in himself, (as it was said before, John v. 26, § xlvii,) yet was it *given him of the Father*, and it is he that qualifies Christ by his Spirit for the great work, for which he sent him into the world: and he accordingly is elsewhere represented as *upholding him* in it. Isa. xlii. 1. Compare John viii. 29, and xvi. 32.

[k] *Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead.*] This version of the words is perfectly agreeable to the original: καθως εφαγον οι πατερες ὑμων το μαννα. But I should not perhaps have taken too great a liberty, had I avoided the ellipsis in the Greek, and ventured to reduce it to a plainer form, by rendering it, *Not like that manna which your Fathers did eat, and are dead.* So Grotius has explained this passage; and though it does not so exactly answer to the Greek, and cannot pass for a literal translation, it plainly expresses the sense of the place, and the words run more natural and easy. See Grotius in loc.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. LXXXI.

THE *hearers* of *Christ murmured*, and perversely objected *against his doctrine.* Let not *ministers* now wonder, if the like capricious humour sometimes prompts *their hearers* to seek occasion of offence, where there is none: let them learn of their great *Master*, *in meekness* to *instruct those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth*, (2 Tim. ii. 25.) Our Lord expressly asserts the necessity of being *taught* and *drawn by the Father*, in order to our knowing him, and *coming to him.* Let us therefore humbly seek these influences *ourselves*, and fix our dependence upon them in all our attempts upon *others* for their conversion and edification. Verse 41, 42 44, 45

Christ here gives us *line upon line, and precept upon precept*, to illustrate and enforce this important doctrine of the necessity of regarding him as the *bread of life*, and of feeding by faith on his *flesh and blood*, which he has *given for the life of the world.* Let us, as we desire any part in his saving blessings, most thankfully receive *his flesh* as *meat indeed*, and *his blood* as *drink indeed.* May God be merciful to those that call themselves *Christians*, and yet are strangers to such a believing intercourse with *Christ*, and to the derivation of *spiritual life* from him! If this be *enthusiasm*, it is the enthusiasm of *scripture*; and the denial or forgetfulness of these important doctrines, is like a fatal *palsy* to the soul, which chills, as it were, all its nerves, and destroys at once, its sensibility and vigour, its pleasure and usefulness. 48, 51 53, 54 55 56, 57

To represent and inculcate these great truths, our Lord afterwards instituted the *sacrament of his supper*, in which we not only commemorate his sufferings, but our own concern in them. It is the language of every intelligent approach to it, that we acknowledge *the life of our souls* to depend on the *merit of his atonement*, and the *communications of his grace.* This is *eating his flesh*, and *drinking his blood*: may we be nourished by it to *eternal life!* Then, though this mortal part of our nature drop into the dust, our *souls will live* and triumph; nor shall our *bodies* finally perish, but be *raised up by Christ* in the great day, to take their part in the full *joy of our Lord.* There these *intermediate ordinances* shall cease, and copious uninterrupted streams of divine *teachings*, and divine *influences*, shall sweetly flow in upon our ever improving, active, rejoicing minds! 58

SECT. LXXXII.

Christ having declared that the foregoing discourse was to be taken in a spiritual sense, is forsaken by many of his disciples; and while the apostles assure him of their continued fidelity, he intimates the treachery of Judas. John VI. 59, *to the end.*

JOHN VI. 59.

SECT. LXXXII. John VI. 59.

THESE things, which had been now delivered by our Lord, *he spake* before all sorts of hearers *in the synagogue, as he was teaching at Capernaum:*[a] and, for wise reasons, he involved a part of his discourse in figurative and mysterious language; as in particular, that which related to eating his flesh, and drinking his blood.

JOHN VI. 59. THESE things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

60 *Many therefore of* those who followed him as *his disciples, having heard* [*it,*] *said, This is a difficult* and strange *discourse;* and *who can hear* or understand *it?* In its literal sense it is plainly absurd, and we know not what other interpretation to give it.

60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*, said, This is an hard saying, who can hear it?

61 *But Jesus knowing in himself that his disciples murmured about it*, though they did not speak out their objections and scruples, *said unto them, Does this* which you have just now heard so much *offend you?* and do you stumble

61 When Jesus knew in himself, that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

62 at it as incredible? [*What*] *then if ye shall see the Son of man ascending up* into heaven *where he was before?*[b] would you then understand what was meant by the bread of life coming down from thence, as the food of the world? Or would you then believe that I came from heaven, notwithstanding the objection you have made as to the meanness of my parentage?[c]

62 *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

63 Thus our Lord intimated his intended ascension; and in the mean time, as a key to his former discourse, he added, As in the human frame

63 It is the spirit

[a] *As he was teaching at Capernaum.*] Probably, (as was hinted above, ver. 25, p. 444.) the foregoing discourses were introduced after the reading of the law and prayer. We are not to wonder at the dialogue which passed here; there are many other instances of disputes, which either Christ or his apostles had with the Jews in their synagogues. See Mat. xii. 9, *&c. seq.* sect. l.; Luke xiii. 10, *&c. seq.* sect. cxvii.; Acts xiii. 44, *&c. seq.*; and xvii. 17.

[b] *Ascending up into heaven, where he was before.*] A very celebrated writer thinks this refers to *the Son of man appearing to Daniel in the clouds of heaven:* but his appearing to him thus in vision, was no more an argument of his being there at the time of that appearance, than the appearance of the symbols of the Greek and Roman empires was an argument of their existence at that time.

[c] Would you then believe that I came from heaven? *&c.*] What Christ here says of his ascension, may be farther intended to intimate the necessity of taking his discourse in a figurative sense, as it would so soon be evidently impossible to eat his flesh, which was to be received into heaven.

SECT. LXXXII.

John VI. 63.

that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

it is the indwelling *Spirit that quickens* every part of it; and *the flesh*, how exactly soever organized and adorned, if separate from that, *profits nothing*, but is an insensible and inactive corpse; so also *the words which I speak unto you are spirit*, that is, they are to be taken in a spiritual sense, *and* then you will find they *are life* to your souls; whereas to take them in a literal sense, would be most unprofitable and monstrous. It is indeed strange that you should think of it; *but* I know *there are some of you who believe not*, and would shelter your infidelity under these mean and disingenuous cavils. This he plainly told them: *for Jesus knew from the beginning, who they were that believed*, and who did *not; and* even knew the very person *who it was that* at last *should* so basely *betray him.*

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning, who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

64

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

And he farther *said, For this reason I told you* (ver. 44.) *that no man can come unto me, except it be given him of my Father;*[d] because I know that the prejudices of corrupt nature lie strongly against such a doctrine as I publish, and that nothing but Divine grace will subdue them.

65

66 From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

From this time many who had borne the name *of his disciples* abusing and misrepresenting what he had now delivered, as if it had been either absurd or utterly unintelligible, *went back and walked no more with him;* plainly perceiving that their true character was now discovered, as well as that their secular views were disappointed.

66

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

Jesus therefore said unto the twelve apostles, *Will you also go away?* The multitude are gone, and will you also follow them, and leave me entirely alone? Choose for yourselves; for I desire not to detain you against your will.

67

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

Then Simon Peter, with his usual zeal, *answered him, Lord to whom should we go*, if we were really disposed to quit thee? or what advantage could we expect by it? *Thou hast the words of eternal life*, and hast even now been directing us in the way to it; and God forbid that any

68

[d] *Except it be given him of my Father.*] To be *drawn by the Father*, (ver. 44.) and to *have faith given him by the Father*, are evidently synonymous terms; which plainly vindicates the interpretation given above, and shews how far the loose and general glosses of Dr. Clarke and Dr. Clagget are from expressing the true and determinate sense of our Lord's words.

SECT. LXXXII. John VI. 69.

other hopes and views should ever be preferred by us to these! However others may be governed by their carnal prejudices, *and* a deluded multitude may treat thee with contempt, *we* firmly *believe, and* assuredly *know*, on the most convincing evidence, *that thou art the Messiah the Son of the living God;* in which persuasion we are determined to hazard all in thy service, and to sacrifice even our lives to thee.

69 And we believe and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

70 *Jesus* then *answered them*, Such a resolution might reasonably be expected from you all; for *have I not chosen you twelve* to the honour of a peculiar intimacy with me, and to a station of the most distinguished eminence and importance in the church?[e] And *yet* I know, that *one of you is a devil*, and, under the influence of that malignant spirit of darkness, will turn my accuser and betrayer.[f]

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

71 This *he spake concerning Judas Iscariot* [*the son*] *of Simon; for* it was *he* who at that time began to harbour in his breast this execrable purpose, and *had* then *thoughts of betraying him;*[g] *though he was one of the twelve* apostles, and therefore under peculiar obligations to fidelity and duty.

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon; for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

IMPROVEMENT.

Verse 60

WE have, through the divine goodness, been made acquainted with those *gospel-truths*, in their full evidence, and mutual connection, which were more obscurely hinted to those who attended on Christ's personal ministry: may we therefore hearken to the *spiritual sense* of this sublime and excellent discourse!

63 And as the credible account of his *ascension into glory* is now

[e] *Have I not chosen you twelve? &c.*] I see not the least reason with Elsner, to expunge the note of interrogation, and render it, *I have not chosen you* all; which would entirely enervate the spirit of the following clause.

[f] My accuser and betrayer.] According to Mr. Locke, our Lord intimates, that this was the reason why he had not more plainly declared himself to be the Messiah, because he knew Judas would have accused him of rebellion against the Romans; (for so the word διαβολος does sometimes signify *a false accuser*; see 1 Tim. iii. 11: 2 Tim. iii. 3; and Tit. ii. 3.) But I can see no proof, that Judas, from the beginning, intended to betray Christ. It is more probable, he at first engaged with him in expectation of secular advantage; and finding those views disappointed, he might now begin to form that detestable scheme, which he afterwards executed. If this was the occasion on which he first entertained the thought, (as I think it probably might,) one would imagine, that such an intimation of his secret wickedness must have struck him to the heart.

[g] *Had thoughts of betraying him.*] The words ηρξατλην αυτον παραδιδουαι may properly, though not necessarily, import thus much; and, I think, had not this been actually the case, Christ would not have said he *is a devil*, but rather that he would become one.

added to the rest, let us receive the whole of his doctrine with the most humble submission: earnestly entreating the influences of divine grace, that we may not only be *drawn to Christ*, but be so *firmly attached* to his interest, that whoever else *forsake him*, we may *never go away*. On the contrary, may we rather collect an argument from their ingratitude and folly, more strenuously and more affectionately to *adhere* to him! Indeed *to whom should we go* but to him? *He has the words of eternal life.* From him therefore, in all lowly subjection of soul, may we learn those lessons on which our everlasting happiness depends! SECT. LXXXII. Ver. 62. 65 67 68

May we never, like *Judas*, conceal a treacherous and disaffected heart, under the specious appearance of piety and goodness! This would be only imposing on ourselves; for his penetrating eye can never be *deceived*. May we approve the integrity of our souls in his sight, and repose an unlimited confidence in him, as one whom *we believe, and know*, to be a Divine Saviour, *Christ the Son of the living God!* 70 64, 71 69

SECT. LXXXIII.

Our Lord vindicates his disciples in neglecting the traditions of the Pharisees, and condemns those corrupt teachers for preferring such traditions to the precepts of the divine law. Mat. XV. 1—9. Mark VII. 1—13.

MARK VII. 1.

MARK VII. 1. THEN came together unto [Jesus] the Pharisees and certain of the scribes, which [were of, *and*]

THE miracles which Jesus wrought, and which have been mentioned above,[a] being reported at the ensuing passover,[b] gave a further alarm to the Jews, and especially to their established teachers; so that to obviate the effect of them, and to prevent the success of his ministry, *there were then gathered unto Jesus the Pharisees, and some of the scribes, who were* stated inhabitants *of Jerusalem*, [*and*] *came* SECT. LXXXIII. Mark VII. 1.

[a] Which have been mentioned above.] As both Matthew and Mark introduce the following discourse immediately after his crossing the sea to Capernaum, when he but just before had fed the five thousand, and John determines the debates in the preceding sections to that time, there can be no reasonable doubt about placing this section, and several more that are expressly connected with it, in this order.

[b] At the ensuing passover.] That a passover followed quickly after the events before related, is expressly determined: (see John vi. 4. and the note there, p. 432, and compare chap. vii. 2.) But the evangelists do not exactly determine whether Christ did or did not attend it. If he did not, we may conclude he had proper reasons for not doing it: but to be sure such numerous and public miracles as he had lately performed, would be the subject of a great deal of discourse at Jerusalem. Compare John vii. 11, 12, and xi. 56.

SECT. LXXXIII. Mark VII. 2.

[*from thence*] on purpose to watch, and if possible to ensnare him. *And*, as they looked on all his actions with a most malignant eye, they soon found an opportunity to cavil; for *seeing some of his disciples eat bread with* what they counted *polluted (that is, with unwashed) hands, they found fault* with them among themselves.

came from Jerusalem. [MAT. XV. 1.]

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, they found fault.

3 *For* this was a favourite tenet of *the Pharisees*, on which they laid a particular stress, *and* indeed almost *all the Jews* pay a considerable regard to it [c] that they *do not* allow themselves to *eat without washing their hands often* with abundance of exactness,[d] and particularly just before their meals: and this they observe, not in consequence of any express divine command, but as *holding the tradition of the elders*, who thought this scrupulous care a decent expression and memorial of their concern to keep themselves free from whatsoever might pollute

3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

4 them. *And* especially [*when they come*] *from the market*, or any other place of public concourse, lest they should without their knowledge have touched any thing unclean, *they eat not, till they have washed* their hands at least, if not their whole body. *And there are many other things*, besides the washing of their hands, *which they* in like manner *receive and maintain* by the authority of the same tradition, [*as*] *the washing of cups and pots* in which their food is put, *and* of the *brasen vessels* made use of in preparing it, *and* even of the very *couches* on which they lie at their meals.

4 And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables.

5 *Then the Pharisees and scribes*, after they had censured the disciples of Christ among themselves (as was observed before,) came to

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes ask-

[c] Almost *all the Jews* pay a considerable regard to it.] Their rabbies carried this to a most ridiculous height; one of them determining the *neglect of washing*, to be a *greater sin* than *whoredom*; and another saying, it would be *much better to die* than to *omit it*. Many instances of this kind may be seen in Dr. Whitby and Dr. Hammond in loc. and in Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. cap. xi. p. 236. It is plain, that other nations commonly used to wash before their meals. See Athenæus, p. 408, Edit. Casaub. 1675, and Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 73.

[d] *Washing their hands often.*] The word πυγμη is ambiguous, being very seldom used. Theophylact's gloss would incline one to render it, as L'Enfant does, *up to the elbows*; and Beza translates it, *with the fist*. (See Godwyn's Moses and Aaron, lib. i. cap. 10, p. 39.) Not being able certainly to determine the point, I thought it sufficient to add in the paraphrase, *with abundance of exactness*. Camero, and Lud. Capellus (in loc.) explain it of *holding up their hands closed*, while the water was poured upon them; and I have nothing to object to the reasons they give for that interpretation.

ed him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but [transgress *it*, for they] eat bread with unwashen hands? [Mat. XV. 2.]

Jesus, and *asked him, Why do not thy disciples walk* and behave themselves *according to the tradition of the elders*, as other pious and regular Jews do; *but transgress* [*it*] in a very obvious and material instance, *for they eat with unwashed hands?*[e] Can they be so ignorant as not to know the traditions that forbid it? Or are they so profane as not to regard them? SECT. LXXXIII. Mark VII. 5.

Mat. XV. 3. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? [Mark VII. 9.—]

And he answering, said unto them, Nay, but I may with much greater reason ask you, *Why do you also transgress* what is infinitely more sacred, even *the command of God* himself, *out of regard to your* own vain and superstitious *tradition?* And this in several instances you run to such a length, as that *you fairly make void the command of God*, and render it insignificant, *that you may observe your tradition*; though, you consider not perhaps from whence it comes, or may easily know that it was derived only from a fallible man. I will give you one notorious instance of it, which you cannot dispute: *for* you well know, that *God has commanded* [*by*] *Moses, saying*, "*Honour thy father and thy* "*mother*:" A precept written with his own finger on the tables of stone, *and* guarded by that awful sanction, "*Whoso curseth* his *father*, "*or* his *mother, let him surely die* without mer-"cy." (See Exod. xxi. 17: Lev. xx. 9; and compare Prov. xx. 20, and Deut. xxvii. 16.) Now for any one to suffer his parents to languish in want of the necessary supplies of life, must certainly be a yet more aggravated wickedness than any impious word which may possibly escape a man's lips in a sudden transport of passion.[f] *But* what you teach is contradictory to this divine command; and an ungrateful child may justify himself in the neglect of it, in consequence of your tradition: for *you as-*

Mat. XV. 3.

Mark VII. 9.

Mat. XV. 4. For God [by Moses] commanded, saying, Honour thy father, and [thy] mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. [Mark VII. 10.]

Mat. XV. 4.

Mark VII. 11.—But ye say, [Whoso-

Mark VII. 11.

[e] *For they eat with unwashed hands.*] It is, in the original, *eat bread*; and I have sometimes retained the Hebraism, but did not think it necessary always to do it. Every attentive reader must have observed, that food in general is called bread, in a multitude of places; and bread is sometimes put even for the provisions of a royal table. 2 Sam. ix. 7, 10, and xii. 20.

[f] In a sudden transport of passion.] Dr. Lightfoot (in his Hor. Heb. in loc.) has well observed, that it is probable a child must be in a transport of very undutiful passion, when he made the rash vow afterwards mentioned, that he would *never* in any instance *relieve his parent*, so that it was a kind of *cursing him*; but had it been said ever so cooly and deliberately the argument here suggested would have taken place, and would have justified the connection.

SECT. LXXXIII

Mark VII. 11.

sert, [*that*] *any one may say to his father or mother*, [*Let that be*] *corban, that is to say*, let it be reckoned as a devoted thing, or be considered as *a gift* dedicated to the altar,[g] *by which thou mightest* otherwise *receive advantage from me*,[h] *and he shall* then be free from the command, and *not* be under any obligation to *honour* and relieve *his father or his mother.*

12 *And* in this manner, out of regard to such a rash and impious vow, *you* not only suppose he may innocently omit this evident duty of natural as well as revealed religion, but will *no more permit him to do any thing for* the relief

Mat. XV. 6.

even of *his father or his mother. And* [*thus*] then it is evidently to be seen, according to the charge which I advanced against you, that, through a gross and impious superstition, *you have* even *invalidated the word*, [*and,*] as it were annihilated *the command of God, by* means of *your tradition, which you have delivered* as a rule of life to be observed with the most scrupulous exactness: *and* it were easy to be shewn in other instances, that *many such like things you do.*

ever] shall say to *his* father or mother, *It is* corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, [and honour not his father or his mother,] *he shall be free.* [MAT. XV. 5, 6.—]

12 And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother.

MAT. XV. —6. Thus have ye made the [word *and*] commandment of God of none effect, [through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.] [MARK VII. 13.]

[g] *Any one may say*, [*Let that be*] *corban, that is to say, a gift.*] So I choose with Elsner, (Observ. Vol. I. p. 74.) to render the ὃς αν ειπη, though I confess, not without some doubt. But I think, it is best to leave as little as possible to be supplied, in order to make up the sense; and on that principle, I should prefer the addition in our own translation of this place, *he shall be free*, to that which Sir Norton Knatchbull proposes, who would render it, *You say*, [*a man honours his parents,*] *if he say it is corban, &c.* thus supposing the passage to imply a repetition from the verse before. But such a construction seems to me quite unparalleled, and very unnatural. Grotius makes και, *redundant*, and would render it, *You teach, that whosoever shall say to his father or mother, It is a gift, &c. —let him not honour his father and mother:* but in the way that I have rendered it, the sense is in effect the same, and the common sense of και is retained.—Some considerable critics, particularly Drusius (de Tribus Sectis, lib. ii. cap. 17.) and Godwyn (Moses and Aaron, lib. vi. cap. 6.) give a very elegant turn to the following words, δωρον ὁ εαν εξ εμου ωφεληθῃς, and would suppose them to be an oath expressed in the elliptical manner, which was very common among the Hebrews; if so, they should be rendered, *I swear by corban*, or the sacred treasury, *thou shalt receive no benefit from me.* But as both the evangelists insert the particle ο, which in this construction has no force, I cannot wholly approve this version, and therefore did not insert it. Perhaps some of these pretended vows of theirs amounted to no more than an obligation to leave some proportion of the overplus of their estates to the temple treasury after their death, which might in a thousand instances be made the cloak of avarice and cruelty. The indeterminate manner of speaking, it must be owned, would lead to such a supposition.—Capellus with immense labour, (and, I think, beyond all farther controversy,) has asserted the interpretation of this text as given in the paraphrase; and has produced a vast variety of passages from the Talmud, to shew the superstitious regard the Jews had to such rash and unnatural vows, as well as the ridiculous ways they sometimes took to evade them. See Lud. Capell. in Mat. xv. 5.

[h] *Advantage from me.*] Sir Norton Knatchbull would render εξ εμου, *of my substance*, or possession: but had this been the exact rendering, it would have been εκ του εμου, of which instances occur in Greek authors.

7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, [as it is written,] [MARK VII.—6.]

3 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me.—[MARK VII.—6.]

MARK VII. 7. Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. [MAT. XV. 9.]

8 For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

Yet these are the things in which you vainly pride yourselves, as proofs of your religion; but, *O you hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophecy of* such as *you*, and very fitly may those words which he delivers in the name of God be applied to you, where he is *saying* of the superstitious Jews of his own time, what may be evidently seen to agree to you, (*as it is written*, Isa. xxix. 13.) "*This people draweth near to* "*me with their mouth, and honoureth me with* "*their lips;* they make a pompous profession, "and pretend to a great deal of devotion and "piety; *but* it plainly appears, that *their heart* "*is far estranged from me.*" Notwithstanding all your talk, then, of strictness in religion; *yet* as this appears to be expressive of your real character, the doom of hypocrites belongs to you; and God may justly affirm of such (as it is added there,) "*In vain do they worship me,* "*while they teach doctrines* or lessons [*that* "*are*] merely *human* inventions and *injunc-* "*tions*,[1] being only the precepts of men, that "have no stamp of the divine authority upon "them," which yet they would insist upon as necessary parts of religion, and would impose them on the consciences of others. And this (as I have said) you may be charged with, not in one single instance only, but in many; *for, leaving the commandment of God, you maintain the tradition of men*, [*relating to*] *the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things you do*, with a zeal by no means required, and on which at best you lay a very disproportionable stress.

SECT. LXXXIII

Mat. XV. 7.

8

Mark VII. 7

8

IMPROVEMENT.

How miserable is the case of those who, while they earnestly contend for the *forms* of *divine worship*, are losing both the im-

Mat. XV. 9

[1] *While they teach doctrines that are human injunctions.*] So I render διδασκοντες διδασκαλιας ενταλματα ανθρωπων. The words seem to allude to Isa. xxix. 13, where, though the present Hebrew copies read the text agreeable to our translation of the place, *Their fear towards me is taught by the precept of men*, Grotius has shewn how a small variation in the original might justify the seventy in that version of theirs, which the evangelist here follows, the sense of which is much the same with what we retain in that place.—I would only observe farther, that διδασκαλια in general signifies *any lesson*, and not merely (as Bishop Hopkins contends,) *a doctrine of faith*; and that the purpose to which our Lord here applies it, plainly shews, that it must refer to *ritual injunctions*. See Bishop Hopkins's Works, I. 150, 151.

SECT. LXXXIII. Verse 8. provement and reward which might be expected from a regular attendance upon it! This is the case of all who *draw near to God with their lips*, while *their hearts are far from him.* May we abhor the vanity of such hypocritical behaviour in the presence of Him who *searches the heart and tries the reins of the children of men!*

Let us learn from this just and severe sentence which our Lord passes on these superstitious Pharisees, to avoid the temper he condemns in them. It much less becomes us as Christians, and especially as *Protestants*, to *impose* on our brethren with rigorous severity those *doctrinal decisions*, or those *ritual observances*, which have not their express foundation in the *word of God*, to which we so constantly appeal as to our common rule. Happy had it been for the church in all ages and nations, had men exerted that zeal for the *truths* and the *institutions* of God, in the beauty and glory of their native simplicity, which has carried them on to defend and propagate their *own inventions*, till religion itself has almost sunk under the weight of the ornaments in which they have dressed it, and the unwieldy armour which they have hung about it!

4—6 Let *children* learn from the *command* which *Christ* has vindicated, to *honour their parents* by a tender care of them in their declining days; remembering, that as no filial duty and gratitude can ever fully repay our obligations to such friends, so an affectionate regard to them is a proper and necessary expression of our filial piety to the great *Father of our Spirits.* Justly may he esteem his *temples profaned*, rather than *adorned*, by the most costly *gifts*, which are the *spoils of nature*, and the *trophies of inhumanity.*

SECT. LXXXIV.

Christ pursues his discourse against the Pharisees, and inculcates the necessity of inward purity. Mat. XV. 10—20. Mark VII. 14—23.

MARK VII. 14.

SECT. LXXXIV. Mark VII. 14. NOW when our Lord had thus condemned the Pharisees to their face, for the unwarrantable stress they laid on their vain and precarious traditions, he took this opportunity to undeceive the people, and to let them see how insignificant this outward strictness was, on which the Pharisees insisted; *and having called all the multitude together to him, he* pursued his discourse, and *said to them, Let* me charge *every one of you* attentively to *hearken to me* in what I now deliver, *and* give all diligence that you

MARK VII. 14. AND when he had called all the people unto him, he said unto them, Hearken unto me every one

of you, and understand. [Mat. XV. 10.]

15 There is nothing from without a man, that, entering into him, can defile him; but that which goeth into the mouth.] but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man. [even that which cometh out of the mouth.] [Mat. XV. 11.]

16 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

17 And, when he was entered into the house from the people, his disciples [came, *and*] asked him concerning the parable; [Mat. XV. 12.—]

Mat. XV. —12. And say unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

31 But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.

14 Let them alone; they be blind lead-

may *understand* it; lest for want of doing it, out of regard to your admired teachers, you impose on your own souls in a matter of the greatest importance. *There is nothing which enters into a man from without that can* really *pollute him* in the sight of God: it is *not*, I say, *that which* is originally from without, and *goes into the mouth*, that renders him polluted;[a] *but the things which come out of a man are those that* actually *defile him*, [*even*] *that which comes out of* [*his*] *mouth*. And I would have you to observe, that much is comprehended in these few important words: remember them therefore, and think of them; and *if any one* of you *has ears to hear*, and a heart to consider, *let him hear* these things, and reflect seriously upon them.

SECT. LXXXIV

Mark VII. 14. 15 16

And when he was come into the house apart *from the multitude, his disciples came* to him, according to their usual custom, [*and*] *asked him concerning the* meaning of this *parable*, or sententious, and to them obscure, saying. *And they* likewise *said to him* at the same time, *Knowest thou*, and art thou sufficiently aware of it, *that the Pharisees, who heard this saying, were* highly *offended* at it, as what appears to strike directly (as they represent the matter) both at the authority of the oral and of the written law?

17 Mat. XV. 12.

But he answered and said, As for their displeasure, I am very little concerned about it, nor shall I ever labour to ingratiate myself with persons of their character: for I consider them as a set of men doomed to destruction: and indeed *every plantation which my heavenly Father has not planted*, and every thing in religion, which, like the vain traditions they advance, is not founded in divine institution, but human invention, *shall* sooner or later *be rooted up*, and cast out of the vineyard, as an incumbrance to it. *Let them alone*, and do not trouble or concern yourselves about their censures; *they are*

13 14

[a] *Not that which goes into the mouth*, &c.] Though it is very true, a man may bring guilt upon himself, by eating what is pernicious to his health, or by excess in the quantity of food and liquor; and a Jew might have done it by presumptuously eating what was forbidden by the Mosaic law, which still continued in force: yet in all these instances, the pollution would arise from the wickedness of the heart, and be just proportionable to it; which is all our Lord asserts.

SECT. LXXXIV.

blind guides of the blind populace, that implicitly commit themselves to their conduct; *and* it is very easy to foresee the consequence; for,

Mat. XV. 14. *if the blind* shall undertake to *lead the blind, they will both fall into a ditch* together, and encumber instead of helping each other, (compare Luke vi. 39, p. 303;) and so will these perverse Pharisees, and their careless followers, perish together.

ers of the blind: and, if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

15 *But Peter answering said unto him,* We would desire thee, however, to *explain* more clearly *to us* what is the meaning of *this parable* which they are so much offended at; for even we ourselves are at a loss to reconcile it, not only with the Pharasaic traditions, but with the injunctions of the law of God, which hath so expressly enjoined a difference of meats.

15 Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

Mark VII. 18. *And Jesus said to them, Are you likewise still so void of understanding,* as not to apprehend the sense of what I said? by which you might have easily perceived that I did not intend immediately to supersede any precept of the law relating to the distinction of clean and unclean food; but only to declare that it is the temper of the mind which God regards, and that no external accident separate from this can render a man offensive to him: and, after all the instructions I have given you, *do you not yet perceive* that it must needs be so, *that whatsoever enters*

MARK VII. 18. And [Jesus said] unto them, Are ye [also yet] so without understanding? Do ye not [yet] perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him? [MAT. XV. 16, 17.—]

19 *from without into a man cannot defile him?* And that for this obvious reason, *because whatsoever enters in at the mouth enters not into his heart,* or mind, in which sin or holiness is seated, and which alone is capable of moral excellence or pollution; *but goes into the belly, and,* passing through the bowels, by the course of natural digestion and evacuation, *is thrown off into the vault,* a place *which cleanses,* as it were, and carries off the grosser dregs of *all the food* that a man eats.

19 Because [whatsoever entereth in at the mouth,] entereth not into his heart; but [goeth] into the belly, and [is cast out] into the draught, purging all meats. [MAT. XV.—17.]

20 *But, said he,* It is indeed *that which comes out of a man that* really *defiles a man,* and makes him sinful in the sight of God, as it originally proceeds from within: [*for*] *the things proceeding out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and* these are *they* that actually *defile a man,* as they must thus be tainted with a great deal of

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man: [*for* those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart, and they defile the man.] [MAT. XV. 18].

SECT. LXXXIV

Mark VII. 21.

21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, [MAT. XV. 19.]

moral guilt and malignity. *For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed* all such corrupt and *evil reasonings*,[b] as those of the Pharisees which you have now been hearing, and all those self-invented sophisms which exclude wisdom at the first entrance; and from hence also proceed *adulteries* and *fornications*, and all sorts of sensuality and uncleanness; all acts of violence, and *murders*; And *thefts*, and *insatiable desires*, and *malevolent affections* of inhumanity and cruelty to mankind; the injuries arising from *false witnessings*, and *deceit*; the vile abominations of *lasciviousness* and intemperance; *an evil* envious grudging *eye*, and that odious temper which discovers itself by such a look; (compare Prov. xxiii. 6; xxviii. 22; and xxii. 9.) the horrid outrages of *blasphemy*, and *pride*; and, in a word, all kind of *folly*,[c] wild imaginations, ungoverned passions, and many other moral irregularities. *All these evils*, and many more which I might mention, *come from within; and these are the things which* do indeed *pollute a man*, and render him an object odious to the infinite purity of the divine nature: *but* the bare undesigned violation of a ceremonial precept cannot do it; and much more evident it is, that *to eat with unwashed hands*, which has no moral impurity in it, and no authority but a vain tradition to forbid it, *does not*, and cannot, *defile a man:* and it must have a very bad tendency to teach people to place religion in things so entirely foreign to it.

22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, [falsewitness,] deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: [MAT. XV. 19.]

22

23 All these evil things come from within, and [these are the things which] defile the man: [but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.] [MAT. XV. 20.]

23

IMPROVEMENT.

MAY we be all *taught of God*, to maintain a constant *watch* over our own *hearts*, as remembering, that *from thence are the*

MAT. XV. 18

b Corrupt and *evil reasonings* οἱ διαλογισμοὶ οἱ κακοὶ.] I chuse to render it *evil reasonings*, rather than merely *evil thoughts*, as better suiting both the original and the occasion, and as containing a more universal and important truth: for those thoughts only defile the heart which it willingly admits, and does, as it were, hold a parley and converse with. And I fear, there are multitudes in the present age, like these Pharisees, who are contracting immense guilt by those corrupt and sophistical reasonings, on the subtilty of which they may highly value themselves and each other.

c All kind of *folly*] I apprehend that ἀφροσυνη here stands directly opposed to σωφροσυνη, or *sobriety of thought and discourse*; and therefore does particularly signify the wild sallies of the imagination, and extravagant passions and appetites, and consequently must include a great many immoralities not touched on in the preceding enumeration.

SECT. LXXXIV. *issues of life*, and from thence the sources of *sin and death!* (Prov. iv. 23.) All the *secret motions* and sentiments of them are *open* to the divine examination and inspection. There then may we begin our cares, to *purify ourselves from all filthiness* both *of the flesh and spirit*, as ever we would *perfect holiness in the fear of God.* (2 Cor. vii. 1.)

Mat. XV. 19. We see what secret *abominations* our Lord has here discovered and marked out. It is a matter of much lamentation, that our *corrupted nature* abounds with such poisonous productions: let us earnestly pray, that they may be rooted out by *divine grace*, lest we ourselves be *rooted out of God's vineyard*, as at once encumbering and deforming it!

Mark VII. 21, 22. May the blessed spirit of God *create in us a clean heart*, and implant in our souls a temper opposite to all these *enormities!* May candour and purity, integrity and tenderness, piety and generosity, humility and wisdom, prevail in our hearts, and shine in our conduct! And, in a word, *whatsoever things are true and honest, just and pure, lovely and of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise*, let us *think on these things*, and practise them! (Phil. iv. 8.)

Mat. XV. 14. Let those who are employed to *guide others*, be especially solicitous to *know* and pursue the *right way* themselves; lest, instead of *saving themselves, and those that hear them*, they both of them at last perish together. We are in danger of it if, like these *Pharisees*, we inculcate on our *hearers* a zeal for the *circumstantials* and appendages of *religion*, while its *essentials* are neglected; and perhaps some of the greatest *enormities of the mind* are consecrated under an honourable name, and profanely *listed under the banner* of the God of holiness and love.

SECT. LXXXV.

Jesus withdraws to the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and there expels a demon from the daughter of a Canaanitish woman; and afterwards, in his return to Galilee, cures a man who was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech. Mat. XV. 21—29. Mark VII. 24, *to the end.*

MARK VII. 24.

SECT. LXXXV. Mark VII. 24. *AND Jesus arose from thence, and withdrew* from the place where these invidious enemies were continually lying in wait for him, *to the borders* [*or*] *coasts of Tyre and Sidon: and* when he was come into those parts, *he entered into a house* as privately as he could, *and would have had no one know* [*it*] that he was there; *but* he had so many eyes upon him wherever he

MARK VII. 24. AND from thence [Jesus] arose and [departed] into the borders [*or* coasts] of Tyre and Sidon, and entered into an house, and would have no man know *it*; but he could not

be hid. MAT. XV. 21.]

25—For [behold, a woman of Canaan out of the same coasts,]whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came, [and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.] [MAT. XV. 22.]

went, that *he could not* long *be concealed* in that retirement. SECT. LXXXV.

Yea, an occurrence quickly happened, that spread the fame of his arrival there through all the neighbourhood; *for behold, a Canaanitish woman* came *out of those coasts*, to whom, though an alien from the common-wealth of Israel, he displayed his power and goodness in a very remarkable manner. Now this was one *whose young daughter*, for whom she had a most tender affection, *was possessed by an unclean* and malignant *spirit*, which often threw her into violent agonies: and, as the fame of Jesus, and of the miracles that he had wrought, was known in all those parts, the afflicted mother was no sooner told of his arrival, but, *having* now an expectation of relief from the great things she had *heard of him*, she *came* immediately to the place where he was, *and cried unto him* at some distance with the most humble importunity, *saying, Have mercy upon me, O Lord, thou Son of David*,[a] consider my distressed case, and extend thy compassion to me, though a stranger; for *my* poor unhappy *daughter is grievously tormented by a* cruel *demon*, that delights in the misery of my child; and I well know that thou art able to cure her. Mark VII. 25.

26 (The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation;) and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

Now it is here to be observed as somewhat singular, that (as we just now hinted,) *the woman was* not a Jew, but *a Greek, a native of Syrophœnicia*,[b] or of that tract of Canaan, in which they now were: *and* therefore, though *she* thus earnestly *besought him to cast out the demon from her daughter*, and the case seemed so compassionable, our Lord thought it proper not to take such immediate notice of it as he had commonly done in the like instances; *But* turning from her, as if he were regardless of her case, *he answered her not a word.* 26 Mat. XV. 23.

MAT. XV. 23. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came, and besought him, saying,

And his disciples came to him on the occasion, *and intreated him, saying, Dismiss her*

[a] *O Lord, thou Son of David.*] Some have argued from this expression, that she was a *proselyte*; but perhaps she might have learned it from some of the Jews; (either immediately, or by report,) and might use it as a title of respect without thoroughly understanding its meaning.

[b] *A native of Syrophœnicia.*] This part of Phœnicia was so called, as it had been formerly conquered by the Syrians.

SECT. LXXXV.

with the grant of her request; *for* she is so overwhelmed with her affliction, that *she crieth after us* wherever she sees us;[c] and not only gives us trouble, but is like to make thy abode here more public than thou wouldest have it. *But he replying, said, I am not sent, but to* seek and recover *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*, and am charged with no immediate message to the Gentile nations, to whom you all know this woman belongs.

Send her away, for she crieth after us.

Mat. XV. 23.

24 But he answered and said, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

24

25 *Then*, perceiving her case was the subject of their discourse, *she came* nearer, *and fell down at his feet* in a most importunate manner, *and worshipped him, saying, Lord*, I beseech thee to *help me*, though a stranger; for surely none ever needed thy help more.

25 Then came she, [and fell at his feet,] and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. [MARK VII.—25.]

Mark VII. 27.

But Jesus said to her, (yet farther to exercise and illustrate her faith,) *Let* the Jews, *the children* in God's family, *first be satisfied; for it is not proper to take the children's bread, and throw it to the dogs*, and such you know that you Gentiles are commonly deemed by our nation, on account of those impurities and abominations that prevail among you.

MARK VII. 27. But Jesus said unto her, let the children first be filled; for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs. [MAT. XV. 26.]

28 *And she replied and said to him, True, Lord*, it would not be fit to put both on a level; *yet* even *the dogs under their master's table* are allowed to *eat the children's crumbs which fall from it:*[d] may I not then humbly hope, that, unworthy as I am, I may also receive some fragments of that mercy which is so liberally bestowed on the Jews, and may have been in some instances wantonly abused:

28 And she answered and said unto him, [Truth,] Lord; yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs [which fall from their master's table.] [MAT. XV. 27.]

Mat. XV. 28.

Then Jesus answering said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; and it was my design to illustrate, rather than to overbear it; now therefore, *for this* lively *saying*, which argues

MAT. XV. 28. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: [for this say-

[c] *For she crieth after us*, wherever she sees us.] As Mark tells us, Christ was entered into a house, and that the application of this woman to him prevented his being concealed as he desired to have been; it should seem that she, having learned that Jesus was there, watched for the disciples as they went in and out; and, having *cried after them* some time, she at length got admittance into the house; and, with the profoundest respect accosted him *at first from some distance*, and *then drew near* and threw herself *at his feet*. Compare Mat. xv. 25, and Mark vii. 25.

[d] *True, Lord, yet the dogs*, &c.] Both Matthew and Mark use the word *nai*, which we have rendered in the former, *Truth*, and in the latter, *Yes*. It is sometimes a form of assenting, and sometimes of entreating. Compare Philem. ver. 20, and see Blackwall's Sacred Classics, vol. I. p. 143.

ing, go thy way, *and*] be it unto thee even as thou wilt: [the devil is gone out of thy daughter.] And her daughter was made whole from that very hour. [MARK VII. 29.]

MARK VII. 30. And, when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

so much humility and piety, *go thy way* with the kindest answer thou couldest wish, [*and*] *be it unto thee even* just *as thou wilt*: thy desire shall be accomplished in all its extent, for *the demon is* already *gone out of thy daughter*, and I assure thee that he shall torment her no more. *And* accordingly *her daughter was cured from that very hour. And, returning back to her house*, fully persuaded of the accomplishment of what Jesus had told her, *she found the demon was gone out, and her daughter* was *lying on the bed* composed and quiet, which of late she had very seldom been.

SECT. LXXXV. Mat. XV. 28. Mark VII. 30.

MAT. XV. 29. And [again] Jesus departed from thence [from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon,] and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee, [through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis,] and went up into a mountain, and sat down there. [MARK VII. 31.]

And Jesus after this *departed again from thence*, even *from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and came near to the sea of Galilee*, passing *through* several places in his way that lay in *the midst of the coasts of Decapolis*, from whence his fame had formerly brought multitudes to follow him: (see Mat. iv. 25, note [1], sect. 36.) *and* on a certain day, in his journey, *he went up to* the top of *a mountain, and sat down there*, to rest himself, and to teach the people, who in great multitudes resorted to him to attend upon his preaching, and brought their sick to be healed by him.

Mat. XV. 29.

MARK VII. 32. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech: and they beseech him to put *his* hand upon him.

33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue:

And, among many other diseased persons, *they brought him one who was* very *deaf, and had* so great *an impediment in his speech* that he was almost dumb too; *and*, making known his case to Jesus, *they besought him that he would lay his hand upon him*, as he had done in many other cases, making no doubt that he would upon this be perfectly restored to his hearing and speech. *And, taking him aside from the multitude*, which was very numerous, *he put his fingers into his ears*, where there was a great obstruction, which hindered him from hearing distinctly; *and, spitting* on his finger, he *touched his tongue*:[e] *And, looking up*, as *to* his Fa-

Mark VII. 32. 33

[e] *He put his fingers into his ears, and, spitting, touched his tongue.*] If any should ask, Why our Lord used these actions, when a word alone would have been sufficient; and such means, (if they may be called means,) could in themselves do nothing at all to answer the end? I frankly confess, I cannot tell, nor am I at all concerned to know. Yet I am ready to imagine, it might be intended to intimate, in a very lively manner, that we are not to pretend to enter into the reasons of all his actions; and that, where we are sure that any observance whatever is appointed by him, we are humbly to submit to it, though we cannot see why it was preferred to others which our imagination might suggest. Had Christ's patients like Naaman (2 Kings v. 11, 12.) been too nice in their exceptions on

SECT. LXXXV.

Mark VII. 34.

ther in *heaven, he groaned*, in token of his earnest desire that these disorders might be removed; *and* then *said unto him*, as with a voice of divine authority, *Ephphatha; that is, Be opened.* 35 *And immediately* the word had its effect; and *his ears were* accordingly *opened, and the string of his tongue*, which had hindered it from moving freely, *was loosed, and he spoke distinctly*, and in an articulate manner, which from his 36 birth he had never done before. *And he charged* the man himself, and *them* that were near, *that they should tell no one* of it; *but, the more he charged them* to conceal it, *the more* they were charmed with his modesty and humility, and consequently so much the more *abundantly did* 37 *they proclaim* [*the cure:*] *And* all *they* who heard of it *were struck with exceeding astonishment, and said, He has done all things well*, and performed the most extraordinary cures in the most amiable and graceful manner; *making*, in this and many other instances, *both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.*

34 And, looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more a great deal they published it.

37 And were beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. XV. 23.

If there be any thing in the whole history of our Lord which might have a tendency to discourage and terrify the humble penitent, it would surely be *his treatment* of this poor *Canaanitish woman*, when she made so humble and so affectionate an application to him; first *keeping silence*; then intimating in 24 words a *coldness*, not to say *an aversion*; and at last representing her but *as a dog* in comparison of the *Jews*. Surely such an 26 answer had almost broke her heart, had it not been secretly supported by *his grace*, while *his conduct* seemed so *unkind*. Happy are they that, like her, (who, though a *Gentile*, did in this instance approve herself a true *daughter of Abraham*,) can *against hope believe in hope!* (Rom. iv. 18.) Happy they who can thus 18 extract *arguments* even *from discouragements!*[t] They will finally conquer and triumph, as this pious *woman* did; and the honours of their *faith* will be commemorated even by *Christ*

these occasions, I fear they would have lost their cure; and the indulgence of a curious, or a petulant mind, would have been but a poor equivalent for such a loss!

[t] Happy are they, &c.] The pious, moderate, and eloquent Bishop Hall has a fine contemplation on this subject, to which I refer the reader with pleasure; and take this opportunity of observing, that, (allowing something for the peculiarities of the age in which he lived,) I have met with no devotional writings on the historical part of scripture, which have generally given me so much entertainment as his.

himself, who soon indulges the overflowing tenderness of his heart in the *applause* he bestows upon her, and the ample *grant* he makes her of all that she asked in its utmost extent. SECT. LXXXV.

The story of the *deaf man*, whose *ears were opened*, and *his tongue loosed*, is one additional instance, among many more, of *Christ's humility*, as well as of his *power*. He *retired* from the admiring *multitude*; he *used means* when he could easily have wrought without them; he solemnly *addressed* his *heavenly Father*, virtually acknowledging, while he *looked up to heaven*, that as man he *derived* his miraculous power *from above*; and he was so far superior to the sentiments of *vanity*, that he *commanded men to conceal* the most glorious and benevolent actions. May all his followers, and especially his ministers, *learn of him* who was thus *meek and lowly!* (Mat. xi. 29.) neither acting as in *their own strength*, when they attempt a *spiritual cure*; nor proclaiming *their own praises*, when they have effected it. Then will they likewise *do all things well*; and there will be *that beauty* in the manner, which no wise man would entirely neglect, even in *those actions*, which are in themselves most excellent and great. MARK VII. 32, *& seq.* 33 34 36 37

SECT. LXXXVI.

Our Lord, after many amazing miracles, feeds above four thousand with seven loaves and a few small fishes; and then goes over to Dalmanutha. Mat. XV. 30, *to the end.* Mark VIII. 1—10.

MAT. XV. 30.

AND great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet, and he healed them:

31 Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be

MAT. XV. 30.

AND while Jesus was seated on the mountain to which he went up, (Mat. xv. 29.) *there came to him*, besides the deaf man of whom we have just been speaking, *great multitudes, having* brought along *with them persons who were lame*, or *blind*, or *dumb*, [*or*] *maimed* by the loss of a limb, *and many others* who had different complaints; *and they cast them at the feet of Jesus*, entreating his compassion, which failed not to operate on such occasions, *and he healed them* all. And *so* many and various were the displays of his miraculous power in the cures he wrought, *that the* whole *multitude was* perfectly *amazed when they beheld the dumb speaking* forth the praises of God and of their great Deliverer; *the maimed made whole* by the recovery of hands and arms which they had lost SECT. LXXXVI. Mat. XV. 30. 31

SECT. LXXXVI

or which were grown quite useless to them;[a] *the lame walking* with vigour and agility, *and the blind seeing* every object distinctly, and im-

Mat. XV. 31.

mediately bearing, without any inconvenience, the full force of unaccustomed light:[b] *and*, struck with such various and pleasing wonders, *they glorified the God of Israel*, who had raised up so illustrious a Prophet to his people, and sent help to so many afflicted creatures whom no human power could have restored.

MARK VIII. 1.

This concourse of people continued with him much longer than could have been imagined; and, the season being favourable, they were so intent on hearing Christ and seeing his miracles, that they lodged two nights together in the fields:[c] and therefore, *in those days, the multitude being very great, and having* spent the provision they had brought out with them, so that now on the third day they had *nothing to eat, Jesus having called his disciples to him,*

2 *says unto them*, I cannot but *have compassion on the multitude* of my hearers, who flock thus eagerly about me, and express such zeal in their attendance, as to expose themselves thereby to many inconveniencies; *for they have continued with me now three days, and* I well know that

3 they *have nothing* left *to eat*; *And* therefore *I will not send them away fasting to their own*

whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see; and they glorified the God of Israel.

MARK VIII. 1. In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples unto him, and saith unto them, [MAT. XV. 32.—]

2 I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat: [MAT. XV.—32.—]

3 And [I will not] send them away fasting to their own

[a] *The maimed made whole*] The word κυλλος, which we render *maimed*, does, in the strictest propriety, (as Festus observes,) signifies *one whose hand or arm has been cut off*; (see Mark ix. 43.) but it is sometimes applied to those who only were disabled in those parts. (See Beza and Casaub. in loc.) And though in some rare instances it may be used to signify a lameness in the feet, (see Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 77, and Albert. Observ. p. 109.) yet, as it is here opposed to χωλους περιπατουντας, *the lame walking*, it must undoubtedly be limited as in the paraphrase.—It is reasonable to suppose, that among the many *maimed*, who were brought on such occasions, there were some whose *limbs had been cut off*; and, I think, hardly any of the miracles of our Lord were more illustrious and amazing than the recovery of such.

[b] Bearing—the full force of unaccustomed light.] So far as we can judge by all the stories of the blind restored to sight, which occur in the gospel, this was universally the case; and I could not forbear pointing out so wonderful a circumstance.

[c] They lodged two nights together in the fields.] This we may infer from the next verse. The season of the year was pleasant, it being, as we have observed, quickly after the passover. (See sect. lxxxiii, note [b], p. 459.) And besides, that the great number of cures which had been wrought but just before might animate them, perhaps they might conclude that the miraculous power of Christ, which was displayed in so many glorious instances around them, would either preserve their health from being endangered by the large dews which fell in the night, or restore them from any disorder they might contract by their eagerness to attend on his ministry.

houses [lest they faint] by the way: for divers of them came from far. [MAT. XV.—32.]

houses, lest, if I do, *they should* some of them *faint by the way: for* our Lord knew that *several of them came from a considerable distance,* and were but ill furnished for procuring accommodations abroad. SECT. LXXXVI. Mark VIII. 3.

4 And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these men with bread here? [Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?] [MAT. XV. 33.]

And his disciples, not reflecting on the miracle he had lately wrought for the relief of the five thousand, or not imagining he would repeat it, *answered him, From whence can any one* hope to *satisfy these men with bread* and other food *here* in this desert country, if he had ever so much money to spare for the purpose? [*And*] especially *whence should we,* whose stock is so small, *have so much bread in the wilderness as* might suffice *to fill so great a multitude,* whose appetites are many of them sharpened by so long a fast? We cannot but wonder to hear thee mention such a design. 4

5 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, [and a few little fishes.] [MAT. XV. 34.]

And he asked them, How many loaves are you provided with, or what *have you* at hand to eat? *And they said,* We have only *seven* loaves among us all, *and a few little fishes,* which is a very trifle to the present purpose. 5

6 And he commanded [the multitude] to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before *them:* and they did set *them* before the people. [MAT. XV. 35, 36.]

And, having ordered them to bring out what they had, *he commanded the multitude to sit down* in ranks *on the ground,* that they might be served as before, in an orderly manner;[d] *and* then *having took the seven loaves, and* solemnly *given thanks* to his heavenly Father, and acknowledging his goodness as the great Author of all mercies, when he had blessed them before them all, *he brake* them into proper pieces, *and gave* [*them*] *to his disciples to set before them; and they* accordingly *set them before the people.* 6

7 And they had a few small fishes; and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before *them.*

And, as *they* likewise *had a few small fishes,* he took them also in the same manner; *and, having blessed* [*them*] as he had done the bread, *he commanded* his disciples *to set them also before* [*the multitude.*] 7

8 So they did [all] eat, and were filled. And they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven baskets [full.] [MAT. XV. 37.]

So they did all eat, and were abundantly *satisfied:* and the disciples afterwards collected what was left, *and they took up* no less than *seven baskets full of what remained of the fragments;* which Jesus ordered them to gather up, 8

[d] That they might be served as before, in an orderly manner.] See note[b] on Mark vi. 40, p. 435. Probably here they might sit an hundred in rank, and forty in file, by which means the four thousand men would be exactly disposed as the five thousand had been.

SECT. LXXXVI. that he might thus convince them in the strongest manner of the greatness of the miracle, and teach them also, at the same time, to use a prudent frugality in the midst of plenty.

Mark VIII. 9. *And they who had eaten* of these loaves and fishes *were about four thousand men, besides* a considerable number of *women and children*, who were there in company with them, and all partook of the same entertainment.

9—And they that had eaten were about four thousand men, beside women and children. MAT. XV. 38.]

Mat. XV. 39. *And*, the repast being over, *he dismissed the multitude: and immediately* after this, *entering into a ship with his disciples*, he crossed the sea, and *came into the parts of Dalmanutha* (which, with several neighbouring cities, stood *in the coasts of Magdala*, not far from Gadara, on the eastern shore of the sea of Galilee;) and there he had an interview with some Pharisees, which will be related in the next section.

MAT. XV. 39. And he sent away the multitude: [and straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples,] and came [into the parts of Dalmanutha] into the coast of Magdala. [MARK VIII. 9, 10.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. XV. 30, 31. WITH what a circle is our blessed Lord surrounded![e] Let us pause a little, and endeavour to paint him in our imagination *on this mountain* where the *astonished multitudes* so justly extolled all these mingled *wonders* of *power* and of *grace*. Let us reflect on the *dumb speaking*, the *maimed made whole*, the *lame walking*, the *deaf hearing*, and the *blind seeing*, that with them *we may glorify the God of Israel.*

But who can describe the sentiments of these happy creatures, who, without any dangerous or painful operation, found themselves, in a moment, restored beyond all the efforts of nature, and beyond all the prospects of hope! With what pleasure did the *ear*, which had just been opened, listen to the pleasing accents of his instructive tongue! How did the *lame* leap around him for joy! and the *maimed* extend their recovered hands in grateful acknowledgments of his new creating power! While the voice of the *dumb* sang forth his praises in sounds before unknown; and the eye of the *blind* checked the curiosity which would have prompted it to range over the various and beautiful objects of unveiled nature, to fix its rapturous regards on the gracious countenance of him that had given it the day!

Let us farther reflect, with what correspondent pleasure must

[e] With what a circle is our blessed Lord surrounded!] As this story of *feeding the four thousand* is so very much the same with what we had in sect. lxxviii. I refer the reader to the *improvement* of *that section* (p. 437.) for practical reflections on the greater part of this; and chuse here to indulge a devout meditation on the number and variety of those cures which Christ performed, which constitutes the whole of this improvement, having been elsewhere but transiently touched upon.

our Lord survey these grateful and astonished creatures, while his benevolent heart took its share in all the *delight* which he gave! *These trophies of his greatness*, how unlike to *those of the field*, the monuments of desolation and slaughter! *Trophies*, for which the *hero* must have struggled with the *man*, and might sit down and weep over his own success! SECT. LXXXVI. Mat. XV. 30, 31.

Whose heart is so insensible as not to feel an *humane* as well as *devout pleasure* in the history of these and the like *miracles*, though the subjects on which they were wrought are long since mouldering in the dust! But let us farther recollect, that our *divine Leader* has other yet more noble and more permanent *trophies;* those immortal *spirits*, which he has *redeemed*, and *sanctified*, and *saved!* So may our transported souls, *O blessed Jesus*, in the consciousness of *health*, *vigour*, and *salvation*, behold thee as *our Deliverer!* So mayest *thou* view us with *satisfaction*, as *the travail of thy soul*, in that *mountain of God* where we hope to offer thee nobler praises, and for ever to consecrate to thy service *those powers*, which thou hast recovered from *weakness*, *dishonour*, and *ruin!*

SECT. LXXXVII.

The Pharisees again demand a sign, and Christ upbraids them with hypocrisy in doing it; and, having crossed the lake again, he cautions his disciples against their leaven, and that of the Sadducees. Mat. XVI. 1—12. Mark VIII. 11—21.

MAT. XVI. 1.

MAT. XVI. 1. THE Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, [and began to question with him,] and [tempting him] desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. [MARK VIII. 11.]

AND when Jesus was landed on the opposite shore of the sea of Galilee, in the coasts of Magdala, *the Pharisees and Sadducees*, notwithstanding the difference of their principles, and the alienation of their affections from each other, agreed to join in an attempt upon him: and accordingly they *came, and began to examine him* in a very crafty and ensnaring manner; *and, to try him* yet farther, *desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven;*[h] pretending that SECT. LXXXVII. Mat. XVI. 1.

h *Desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.*] On the whole, I am ready to think, the two things mentioned in note [g] on Mat. xii. 38, p. 346, are to be united; and that what they here demanded was the very thing which Josephus tells us. (Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 13. [al. 12.] § 4.) Impostors of those times promised they would shew them from God: under the character of σημεια ελευθεριας, *signs of liberty*, or some miraculous appearance from heaven, to assure them of deliverance from the Roman yoke. And on these principles they continued their demands in the apostles' time, (1 Cor. i. 22.) though so many

SECT. LXXXVII. Mat. XVI. 1. they could not acquiesce merely in such miracles as he had wrought upon earth, where there was much more room for artifice and deceit, and evil spirits might have some greater influence than in the upper regions. (Compare Mat. xii. 38. § lxiii.)

2 *But he, answering, said unto them,* It is most apparent you ask this out of a desire to cavil, rather than to learn the divine will; for in other cases you take up with degrees of evidence far short of those which you here reject; as for instance, *you* readily *say in an evening,* [*It will be*] *fair weather* to morrow, *because the sky is*
3 this evening *of a* bright and *fiery red: And in the morning,* [*It will be*] *tempestuous weather*[b] *to-day, for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, you know how to distinguish the face of the heavens,* and to form from thence probable conjectures concerning the weather; *and can you not* [*distinguish*] *the signs of the* present *times,* and see by the various miracles which are daily performed among you, and the other tokens which attend mine appearance, that this is indeed the period which you profess to desire with so much eagerness, and which you might discern with much less sagacity?

Mark VIII. 12 *And, sighing deeply,* as being touched *in his* own *spirit* with a most compassionate sense of their guilt and misery, *he said, Why does this generation seek after a* farther *sign? Verily,* as I said once before on this occasion, (Mat xii. 39, § lxiii.) *I* now *say* it again *to you,* This is *an evil and adulterous generation* which *demands a sign, and no* such *sign* as it requires *shall be given it, unless it be the sign of the prophet Jonah,* who lay three days and nights in the belly of the great fish, and then came out alive; to which a most remarkable resemblance will be quickly manifested in the resurrection of the Messiah on the third day, that will more-

2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be* fair weather, for the sky is red.

3 And in the morning, *It will be* foul weather to-day, for the sky is red and lowring, O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times?

MARK VIII. 12. And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why do this generation seek after a sign? Verily I say unto you, [A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.[[MAT XIV. 4.—]

signs from heaven had there been given in the voice from thence; in the preternatural darkness at our Lord's crucifixion; in the descent of angels in repeated instances; and in that of the Holy Spirit, in a visible form, as well as in the most sensible effects. See Dr. Lardner's Cred. lib. book i. chap. 5. § 2. Vol. I. p. 291.

[b] *Tempestuous weather.*] So χειμων properly signifies. Dr. Lightfoot justly observes, that the Jews used to value themselves highly on their skill in prognosticating the weather. And Grotius has well observed in his note on this place, what a variety of signs marked out that time for the arrival of the Messiah.

over be attended with the appearance of an angel coming down from heaven. SECT. LXXXVII

13 And he left them; and, entering into the ship again, departed to the other side. [MAT. XVI.—4.]

And, having said this, *he* staid no longer to debate the matter with persons of so perverse and disingenuous a temper, but *left them; and entering again into the ship* which brought him over the sea, he *departed to the other side* of the lake. Mark VIII. 13

MAT. XVI. 5. And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread, [neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.] [MARK VIII. 14.]

And when his disciples were come to the other side of the sea, they were concerned to find that *they had forgotten to take* any *bread: and*, having used all the fragments which they carried over with them in the baskets, they *had* now *no more than one loaf with them in the ship.* Mat. XVI. 5.

6 Then Jesus [charged them, saying,] Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees, [and *of* the leaven of Herod.] [MARK VIII. 15.]

And Jesus, willing to improve this circumstance, considering what had lately passed, *gave them a* solemn *charge, saying, Be very cautiously on your guard*[c] *against the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and* particularly take heed of *the leaven of Herod:*[d] intending thereby to caution them against those corrupt mixtures which these sects had introduced to the depraving of religion; which tended, like leaven, to overspread and sour, and puff up the mind, and so to prevent the efficacy of divine instruction upon it. 6

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have taken no bread. [MARK VIII. 16.]

But the slowness of their understanding shewed itself on this occasion, as it had done on many others; *and they debated* privately *among themselves, saying*, [*It is*] surely *because we have taken no bread* with us that our Lord thus cautions us against the leaven of these men, as if they polluted whatever they touched. 7

8 *Which* when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves because ye have brought no bread? [MARK VIII. 17.—]

[*Which*] *when Jesus perceived*, as he knew all the secret workings of their minds, *he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why do you reason* in this manner *with yourselves?* and why is it that you are under such concern *because you have brought no bread? Do you not yet consider*, after all that you have seen and heard, *nor understand* what has so lately passed before your eyes? [*and*] *have you still your hearts so hardened*, and your minds so stupified, as not to draw so easy a 8

9—Do ye not yet perceive, [neither] understand? [have ye your hearts yet hardened?] [MARK VIII.—17.] 9

[c] *Be very cautiously on your guard.*] This sufficiently expresses the sense of the words βλεπετε και προσεχετε, which are repeated in the original, to urge the caution with the greater force and emphasis.

[d] *Leaven of Herod.*] Those Sadducees, who were also Herodians, might, with peculiar propriety, be singled out by our Lord, to caution his disciples against them. See Grotius in loc. and note on Mark iii. 6. p. 287.

SECT. LXXXVII.

consequence from such repeated miracles, as to be free from any anxious concern on this account, because you have but one loaf? Are you like so many senseless images? *Having eyes, do you not see* with them? *and, having ears, do you not hear? and,* with those natural powers of memory and reflection, *do ye not re-*

Mark VIII. 18.

19 *member* what you were witnesses to but a few days ago? Let me refresh your memories, and ask you, *When I broke the five loaves,* and you with your own hands distributed them *among the five thousand* men till they were all satisfied, *how many baskets full of fragments took ye up?*

20 *They say unto him,* We well remember that we took up *twelve. And,* added he, *when* in like manner [*I divided*] *the seven* [*loaves*] *among the four thousand,* and fed them to the full, *how many baskets full of fragments did you* then *take up?*[c] *And, they said,* Lord, we know we took up *seven.*

21 *And he* farther *said to them,* Since you remember these facts, *how is it that you do not understand* by them *that I did not speak to you concerning bread,* so as to blame you for having brought no more bread, but meant *that you should be on your guard against the leaven of* those erroneous notions and corrupt principles which are so common among *the Pharisees,* Herodians, *and Sadducees?*

Mat. XVI. 12.

Then they were sensible of their mistake, and *understood that he did not charge them to beware of the leaven of bread; but* that he intended to warn them *of the* evil *doctrine* and example *of the Pharisees and Sadducees,* against which so many of his discourses were most justly levelled.

MARK VIII. 18 Having eyes, see ye not? and, having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember? [MAT. XVI.—9.—]

19 When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve. [MAT. XVI.—9.]

20 And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven. [MAT. XVI. 10.]

21 And he said unto them, How is it that you do not understand [that I spake *it* not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?] [MAT. XVI. 11.]

MAT. XVI. 12. Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

[c] *How many baskets full of fragments did you take up?*] The learned Dr Daniel Scott, on Mat. xvi 10, with his usual accuracy has observed, that two different words are used in this and the preceding verse for *baskets.* κοφινους and σπυριδας. The former signifies *larger baskets;* and therefore is translated panniers by the French: we have borrowed the word from them; and it seems from its etymology first to have been given them from their being used by bakers to carry about large quantities of bread. The other seem to have been *smaller baskets* with handles, and such as consequently might easily be carried on the arm. It is observable, that our Lord did not affect to rise in the circumstances of the two miracles here mentioned. The latter, though in some particulars inferior to the former, was equally a demonstration of the divine power of Christ, and therefore equally to the purpose for which it is here mentioned; not to urge that it was of the two the more fresh in their memories.

IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. LXXXVII

So evident is it, that the circumstances of a scripture story may be remembered, where the design of it is overlooked or forgot! It is much to be wished, that those which we have been surveying, may not increase the number of such instances. Mark VIII.

In all those cases wherein the arm of the Lord has been made bare in our favour, let us seriously reflect on the Divine power and goodness, and learn from past experience to trust it for the time to come. Never let us fall into the perverse suspicions of the *Israelites, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?* (Psal. lxxviii. 19.) But let us *be strong in faith, giving glory to God,* and cheerfully repose ourselves on his care, who can never want wisdom to judge aright of the necessities of his people, or power to relieve them, even in the greatest extremities. 18, 21 19, 20 Mat. XVI. 8.

We see a new instance of the perverseness of these scribes and Pharisees. They tempted Christ by unreasonable demands; and he justly suffered them to go away without the additional demonstration they sought. It is not for us to prescribe to God what degrees of evidence he shall give us. Let us impartially pursue and improve what we have; and be very careful that our sagacity and openness to conviction, in other matters of much less importance, may not condemn our stupidity, or obstinacy, where the truths of God and the salvation of our souls are concerned. 1 4 2, 3

It is our concern to beware of erroneous principles in religion, and of every corrupt leaven which might be ready to insinuate itself into our minds; especially of that, which, like the leaven of the Pharisees, would exalt our confidence in ourselves; or, like that of the Sadducees, would impair our persuasion of a future judgment, and our solicitous concern to live as in the views of it. May the oracles of Divine truth ever appear to our minds as the rule by which all doctrines are to be tried! and let us, in the spirit of love, contend earnestly for that faith which we believe to have been once delivered to the saints; that both our sentiments and actions may finally be found blameless, unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ! Amen. 6, 12

SECT. LXXXVIII.

Christ gradually heals the blind man at Bethsaida; and owns to his disciples that he is the Messiah, applauding Peter for expressly acknowledging him under that character. Mark VIII. 22—30. Mat. XVI. 13—20. Luke IX. 18—21.

MARK VIII. 22.

SECT. LXXVIII.

Mark VIII. 22

AND when our Lord had thus crossed the sea, *he came to Bethsaida; and* his fame being well known there, as soon as he entered the place, *they brought him a blind man, and entreated him that he would* be pleased only to *touch him*, as being well assured that this would be sufficient for the recovery of his sight. *And*, as he chose to work this miracle in private, *he took hold of the blind man's hand, and led him out of the town*[a] in the most tender and condescending manner; *and having spit upon his eyes, and laid his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw any thing. And looking up, he said, I* do indeed discern the forms of things, in an imperfect manner, and *see men walking* before me, but it is so obscurely, *as* that I am hardly able to distinguish them from *trees*, any otherwise than by their motion.[b] *Then he laid his hands again upon his eyes, and caused him to look up* a second time; *and* upon this *he* found his sight *was* perfectly *restored, so that he saw every man* and thing about him *clearly* and distinctly. *And he sent him away* directly *to his own house*, which lay in some neighbouring village; *and said* unto him, *Enter not into the* ungrateful *town* of Bethsaida, to proclaim what has now been done for thee; *neither tell* the circumstances of *it to any* man dwelling *in the town*, for they are unworthy the knowledge of such a miracle; but content thyself with returning thy acknowledgments to God for his favour to thee; for I assure thee, that in what I do I am animated only by a sincere regard to the glory of him that sent me, and to the relief of afflicted creatures.

And Jesus, with his disciples, went out from the city of Bethsaida, in the neighbourhood of which this miracle had been performed, and came *into the towns* belonging to a city in the northern

MARK VIII. 22.

AND he cometh to Bethsaida, and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.

23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put *his* hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought.

24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees walking.

25 After that he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

26 And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell it to any in the town.

27 And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Ce-

[a] *And led him out of the town.*] Grotius thinks it was an intimation of his just displeasure against the inhabitants of Bethsaida, for their ingratitude and infidelity, that he would not permit them to be eye-witnesses of this miracle, or even suffer the person who received the cure to go back thither to proclaim it. Comparo Matt. xi. 21, sect. lix.

[b] *I see men walking, as trees.*] Probably they might not be far from the way-side, and these might be passengers who happened then to be going by; for it seems by the story, that our Lord, when he took him out of the town, permitted none of his company to attend him.

SECT. lxxxviii.

rea Philippi: and [LUKE; it came to pass] by the way, [when Jesus came into the coasts of *it*,] [LUKE, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him, and] he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I [the Son of man] am? [MAT. XVI. 13. LUKE IX. 18.]

part of Canaan, (near mount Lebanon,) which had formerly been called Laish, but now bore the name *of Cesarea Philippi*, having lately been rebuilt by Philip the tetrarch.[c] *And it came to pass by the way*, as they were on their journey, *when Jesus was* just *come into* [*those*] *parts*, he retired a while for devotion; and *when he had been praying with his disciples apart, he inquired of them, saying, Whom do men say that I*, who have so long conversed among them as *the Son of man, am?* What notions do you find that men generally form of me?

Mark VIII. 27

LUKE IX. 19. They, answering, said, [Some *say that thou art*] John the Baptist; but some *say* Elias; [and others Jeremias,] and others *say* that one of the old prophets is risen again. [MAT. XVI. 14. MARK VIII. 28.]

And they, replying, said, Some [*say that thou art*] *John the Baptist* risen from the dead, with an additional power of working miracles; *but others* [*say*] that thou art *Elijah* the prophet, who art come to prepare the way of the Messiah; *and others* say that thou art *Jeremiah*;[d] *and others*, in a more general way, *that one of the ancient prophets is risen again.*

Luke IX. 19.

MARK VIII. 29. And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And [Simon] Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ, [the Son of the living God.] [MAT. XVI. 15, 16. LUKE IX. 20.]

And, after they had told him what were the thoughts of others, *he* then *said to them*, for the trial of their faith, *But* tell me truly and plainly your own sentiments; *whom do you* yourselves think and *say that I am? And Simon Peter* immediately *answered*, with his usual zeal and forwardness, *and said to him*, in the name of the rest, Lord, we well know that *thou art the* great expected *Messiah*; and art not only the Son of man, the worthy Heir of that glorious and extensive kingdom promised to him; but art, in a proper and incommunicable sense, *the Son of the* ever *living God*; and we believe in thee as such, and adore thee under that Divine character

Mark VIII. 29

MAT. XVI. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him,

And Jesus, replying, said unto him, Thou hast

Mat. XVI. 17

[c] *Cesarea Philippi*, &c.] Philip the tetrarch called the chief city of this tract of land Cesarea, in honour of Tiberius Cæsar; and Philip's own name was added, to distinguish it from that other Cesarea so often mentioned in the Acts; (chap. viii. 40; ix. 30; x. 1; xii. 19; xxi. 8; xxiii. 23, 33, and xxv. 4, 13;) which was a fine port on the Mediterranean sea, and had been rebuilt by Herod the Great, and named in honour of Augustus Cæsar.—Josephus gives Philip so good a character, that some have thought our Lord retired into his territories for security from the insults of his enemies elsewhere. See L'Enfant's Introduction, p. 27.

[d] *Others* say that thou art *Jeremiah*.] Mr. Craddock has observed, that the Jews seem to have had a tradition among them, that Jeremiah the Prophet would appear among them, when the Messiah came, to recover the *ark of the covenant*, which they fancied he had hid: 2 Mac. ii. 5. (See Craddock's Harmony, Part ii. p. 12.) And Dr. Whitby imagines, they might farther encourage themselves in that notion, from Jer. i. 5. 10. (See his note on Mat. xvi. 14.)

SECT. LXXXVIII. Mat. XVI. 17

confessed a truth, and a truth of the utmost importance; *blessed art thou*, therefore, *O Simon Bar-Jonas*, (or the son of Jonas,) in being brought thus firmly to believe it: *for flesh and blood hath not revealed* [*it*] *to thee*, thou hast not learnt it by human report, or the unassisted sagacity of thine own mind; *but my Father in heaven* has discovered it to thee, and wrought in thy soul this cordial assent in the midst of those various prejudices against it, which pre-

18 sent circumstances might suggest. *And*, as thou hast been so ready to make this acknowledgment, *I also* in return *say to thee, Thou art* indeed *Peter*, (see John i. 42, p. 130,) thou art, as thy name signifies, a substantial rock; *and*, as thou hast shewn it in this good confession, I assure thee, that *upon this rock I will build my church*;[e] faith in me as the Son of God shall be its great support, and I will use thee as a glorious instrument in raising it: yea, so immoveable and firm shall its foundation be, and so secure the superstructure, that though earth and hell unite their assaults against it, *and* death, in its most dreadful forms, be armed for its destruction, *the gates of hell*, or the unseen world, *shall not* finally *prevail against it* to its ruin;[f] but one generation of Christians shall

Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona! for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

[e] *Upon this rock I will build my church.*] I look upon this as one of those scriptures the sense of which might be most certainly fixed by the particular tone of voice and gesture with which it was spoken; and therefore have paraphrased it with a latitude, which an intelligent reader will easily observe.—If our Lord altered his accent, and laid his hand on his breast, it would shew that he spoke, not of the *person*, but of the *confession* of Peter (as most protestant divines have understood it,) and meaned to point out himself as *the great Foundation*. Compare 1 Cor. iii. 10, 11.—But if he turned to the other apostles, and pointed to Peter, that would shew, he meaned to intimate the honour he would do him, in making him an eminent support to his church. This is the sense which Grotius, Le Clerc, Dr. Whitby, Dr. Clarke, and L'Enfant defend, and it seems to suit best with the connection; (see Whitby in loc.) But to be a *foundation* in this sense, was not *his honour* alone: his *brethren* shared with him in it, (see Eph ii. 20, and Rev. xxi. 14.) as they did also in the power of *binding* and *loosing*. (See Mat xviii. 18, and John xx. 23.)—On the whole, how weak the arguments are which the Papists draw from hence, to support the supremacy of Peter in their wild sense of it, is sufficiently shewn by Bishop Burnet on the Articles. p. 180. Calvin Institut. lib. iv. cap. 6. Dr. Barrow on the Creed, Serm. xxviii. Dr. Patrick in his Sermon on this text, and a multitude more, whom I need not name.—There seems a reference in this expression to the common custom of building citadels upon a rock.

[f] *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it* to its ruin.] It is most certain that the phrase here used πυλαι αδου, does generally in the Greek writers signify, *the entrance into the invisible world*; as Elsner (Vol. I. p. 77, 78,) and Albert (Observ. p. 111, 112,) have abundantly proved. So the Seventy use it, Isaiah xxxviii. 10. and Job xxxviii. 17. (Compare Wisd. of Sol. xvi 13.) So that it is equivalent to *the gates of*

SECT. LXXXVIII.

Mat. XVI. 18.

arise after another, even to the very end of time, to maintain this truth, and to venture their lives and their souls upon it, till at length the whole body of them be redeemed from the power of the grave. In the mean time, I will raise thee, O Peter, and thy brethren, whose faith herein agrees with thine, (compare John xx. 23.) to distinguished honours in my church; *and I will give unto thee*, in particular, *the keys of the kingdom of heaven*, and make thee the instrument of opening it both to the Jews and Gentiles:[g] yea, so fully shalt thou be instructed in my will, *and* in the constitution of my kingdom, that *whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*;[h] that is, thou shalt have authority to declare what precepts of the Mosaic religion are superseded, and what are continued, and what things are al-

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

leath, Psal. cvii. 18. and elsewhere. The plainest and fullest sense seems to be what I have given in the paraphrase; for the vindication of which, see Dr. More's Theological Works, p. 110, and Dr. Whitby's note on this place. Grotius also supposes it refers to the final *triumph of the saints over the grave* at the general resurrection. This does indeed imply a victory over the power and policy of infernal spirits; but I cannot apprehend a reference to this to be chiefly intended; as it is certain, that the Greek word ἅδης [*hades*] does very seldom signify the *state of the damned*, but generally, (as שְׁאוֹל in Hebrew,) the *invisible world* in general. See Mr. Howe's Works, Vol. II. p. 61, 62.

[g] *I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven*, &c.] As stewards of great families, especially of the royal household, bore a key, probably a golden one (as the lords of the bed-chamber do,) in token of their office, the phrase of *giving a person the key* naturally grew into an expression of *raising him to great power*: (compare Isa xxii. 22, and Rev. iii. 7.) And this seems more natural and certain than Bishop Burnet's supposition, that Christ refers to the custom of giving a key to the Jewish rabbies when they were admitted into their office, in token of the *power* given them to *expound the scripture*. See Grotius on Luke xi. 52, and Bishop Burnet's four Discourses, (p. 241, 242.) *Peter's opening the kingdom of heaven*, as being the *first* that preached it, both to the Jews, (Acts ii.) and to the Gentiles, (Acts x.) may be considered as an illustration of *this promise*: but I apprehend it more fully explained by the *power of binding and loosing* afterwards mentioned.

[h] *Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven*, &c.] A power to *bind and loose* may signify, in general, *great authority* in a family or state; which sense it plainly has, both in Josephus and Plutarch. (See Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 80.) When applied to *Judges* in criminal cases, it signifies to *absolve* or *condemn* (see Raphel. Annot. ex Herod, page 169;) and when used of teachers, especially in the Jewish language, it refers to their explications of the law; and thus *to bind* is to oblige a person to do or forbear any thing in question, or to declare a thing commanded or forbidden; and *to loose* is to declare the thing to be indifferent, or the person at liberty with respect to it. (See Lightf. Hor. Heb. in loc.)—The learned Selden has endeavoured to shew that the clause before us must be interpreted in this sense, (see Seld. de Synod. lib. ii. cap. 7;) and many of the greatest characters for criticism in our own country and abroad have followed him; and among the rest the present celebrated Bishop of Winchester, in his glorious controversy on the subject

SECT. lxxxviii.

lowed or forbidden to my disciples; and I will myself confirm those decisions, whether general or personal, as made by the influences of my unerring spirit communicated to thee and thy brethren, and will determine men's final state in a manner agreeable to them.

Mat. XVI. 19.

Luke IX. 21.

And upon this *he strictly charged and commanded his disciples that they should tell no man,* at present, *this thing concerning him,* which he had so expressly acknowledged to them, *that he was Jesus the Messiah,* and that he actually professed and owned the title; because he knew it was like to be interpreted in a very unjust and unnatural manner, which might have rendered him and his followers obnoxious to the Romans, who would unreasonably look on such a profession as a claim to regal power, and utterly inconsistent with the rights of Cæsar.

LUKE IX. 21. And he straitly charged [his disciples,] and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing [MARK, of him,] [that he was Jesus the Christ.] [MAT. XVI. 20. MARK VIII. 30.]

IMPROVEMENT.

Mat. XVI. 16, 18.

WE here behold the great Foundation of our faith and hope, even *Jesus, the Rock of ages,* the *same yesterday, to-day, and for ever,* (Heb. xiii. 8.) who is *Christ the Son of the living God. Other foundation can no man lay,* (1 Cor. iii. 11.) On him may our souls rest, and the fiercest tempests shall rage in vain!

18 Our Lord foretold that *the gates of hell should not* be able to *prevail against his church* as thus founded: and behold, even to this day, the accomplishment of the prediction. As Christians of one age have sunk into their graves, a new harvest has sprung up in the next; and, in spite of all the artifices of Satan to pervert *young minds,* and all the advantages with which he attacks them, *instead of the fathers* have been *the children,* to be *accounted to the Lord for a generation.* (Psal. xlv. 16, and xxii. 30.)

19 Let us thankfully adore the Divine goodness herein; and be very sensible how much we are indebted to that goodness in those powers communicated to the apostles, on whom, as subordinate foundations, we are built, (Eph. ii. 20.) As they received so ample a *commission,* and *obtained grace from the Lord to be faithful* to it, let us pay the humblest regard to their teachings; as well knowing, that what they have *bound on earth is bound in hea-*

of Church Authority. I have included that sense, and taken the words in a yet greater extent, as the learned Puffendorf also does, (De Habitu Relig. Christ, &c. § 22—25;) and I shall, with great pleasure, submit to those ecclesiastical rulers who shall prove, as the apostles did, their *power* to *explain the laws of Christ* in a decisive way, and their authority efficaciously to *absolve* or *condemn* men, according to the sense they give of them.

ven, and what they have inculcated, was solemnly confirmed by Divine authority. SECT. LXXXVIII.

If we have listened with attention to those immortal writings of theirs, by which, being dead they yet speak; and have found them the effectual means of revealing Christ in our hearts, in all his Divine glories and saving powers; let us remember, that we owe it not to flesh and blood, or the most excellent human instruments, alone, but to the influences of our Father in heaven. Verse 17

That efficacious grace is freely exercised, and operates in various methods; on some, in a more instantaneous way; on others, like the power of Christ on the blind man of whom we have been reading, by more gradual advances. Let us be thankful for whatever light we receive, and press on to brighter discoveries; and join with them proportionable degrees of gratitude to Christ, and veneration for his gospel. Mark VIII. 23—25

SECT. LXXXIX.

Christ prophesies of his approaching sufferings, rebukes Peter for being offended at them; and exhorts his disciples to self-denial, and a readiness for martyrdom in his cause. Mat. XVI. 21. *to the end.* Mark VIII. 31. *to the end;* IX. 1. Luke IX. 22—27.

MAT. XVI. 21.

MAT XVI. 21. FROM that time forth began Jesus to [teach *and*] shew unto his disciples, how that he, [the Son of man,] must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things, [and be rejected] of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and [after three days] be raised again the third day. [MARK VIII. 31. LUKE IX. 22.]

NOW when *Jesus* had applauded the confession of Peter, (as recorded above,) and thereby expressly declared to all the apostles that he was the Messiah, he *from that time began* more plainly than ever *to teach* [*and*] *shew to his disciples, that he, the Son of man*, who was indeed the Christ of God, *must* in a few months more *go to Jerusalem; and* there, instead of being owned under the royal character he bore, and submitted to by princes and people, must *suffer many* most injurious *things, and be* disdainfully *rejected by the elders and chief priests, and scribes* of their nation, *and be killed* in a most cruel and outrageous manner: but he went on *and* added, to encourage them under this gloomy prospect, That *after* having lain part of *three days* under the power of death, he should *be raised again on the third day.* SECT. LXXXIX. Mat. XVI. 21.

MARK VIII. 32. And he spake that saying openly. And

And, as *he* now *spake that saying plainly* and freely,[a] whereas he had before only given dis- Mark viii. 32

[a] *Plainly* and freely.] So παῤῥησια in our version, (compare John x. 24, &c.) evidently signifies, and is often rendered (xi. 14.) and in this sense it is opposed to

SECT. CXXXIX.

Mark VIII. 32.

tant and obscure hints of it, they were exceedingly surprised and troubled: *and Peter*, elevated with what our Lord had before been saying, and unable to reconcile it with what he now heard, *took him* [*by the hand*,[b]] *and began*, with a mixture of tenderness and surprise, *to chide him* for this melancholy discourse, *saying*, *God* in his infinite mercy *forbid*,[c] that thou, *O Lord*, shouldst ever be thus treated! *This* injury and violence, I persuade myself, *shall not* by any means *be* done *unto thee.*

Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, [saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.] [MAT. XVI. 22.]

33 *But* [*Jesus*,] *when he had turned about, and looked* round him *on his* other *disciples*, whose sentiments he knew to be much the same, *rebuked Peter* with an unusual severity; *and said to him*, *Get thee behind me*, *Satan*,[d] for *thou* actest the part of a devil, rather than a friend; and *art a scandal to me*, in thus endeavouring to obstruct the great end of mine appearance in the world;

33 But when he had turned about, and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, [and said unto *him*,] Get thee behind me, Satan, [thou art an offence unto

speaking in proverbs; John xvi. 25, 29. Christ had before given *obscure hints* of this, John ii. 19; iii. 14; vi. 51; Mat. x. 38; xii. 40; and elsewhere.

[b] *Took him by the hand.*] So I render the word προσλαβόμενος, Compare Rom. xv. 7, Gr. which may help to illustrate the sense of it.

[c] *God* in his infinite mercy *forbid!*] Dr. Fuller supposes that ἱλεώς σοι should be rendered, *May God have compassion upon thee!* (See Fuller's Miscel. Sacr. lib. ii. cap. 2.) Heinsius, Grotius, and Le Clerc, give the same interpretation; which is also asserted at large by the learned Mr. Wasse, (Biblioth. Liter. Vol. I. p. 30.) And the accurate Dr. Scott renders it, *Mercy on thee!* which is more literal than any of the rest. I think the phrase, as used by the Seventy, generally signifies *God forbid*; or, as we render it, *Far be it from thee!* (See 1 Sam. xiv. 45; 2 Sam. xx. 20; 1 Kings xxi 3; 1 Chron. xi. 19; and compare 1 Mac. ii. 21.) But as the accurate critics I have mentioned above, suppose there is a particular tenderness in their interpretation, I have endeavoured to preserve it in the paraphrase.—Some would render it, *Have compassion on thyself*; but I cannot recollect any place where it has that sense; though 2 Sam. xxiii. 17, and Gen. xliii 23, Septuag. have been especially alledged as instances of it. See Elsner. Observ. Vol. I. p. 81.

[d] *Get thee behind me, Satan.*] Compare Luke iv. 8. p. 120.—The word *Satan*, which is originally Hebrew, and has from thence been taken into several languages, is often used in the Old Testament to signify *an adversary*, (see Numb. xxii. 32; 2 Sam. xix. 22; 1 Kings v. 4; and xi. 14.) and the expression has appeared so harsh to some, as coming from the mouth of Christ to one of his apostles, that they have rather chosen to translate it, *O mine adversary.* But as the evangelists have *both* made use of the word Σατανα, which must be owned to have a sound as odious in the Greek as it has now with us, we may conclude that it was used by Christ, or his *rebuke to Peter* would have been otherwise expressed by some Greek word that signifies *an adversary.* Nor can the word appear at all too harsh, when we consider that the tendency of Peter's saying, though it was spoken out of a singular affection to his Master, was to obstruct the great design for which he came into the world, and none but Satan could desire to prevent what he was ready to submit to for the salvation of lost sinners.—Dr. Young, (in his Sermons, Vol. II. p. 137.) rendering ἱλεώς σοι *Favour thyself*, supposes that our Lord calls Peter, *Satan*, because he now fell on that device which Satan uses the most successfully of all his artifices to undo men; that of *self-indulgence*: and so makes this scripture an introduction to his discourse on *self-denial.*

me; [for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. [MAT. XVI. 23.]

for by this it plainly appears, that *thou dost not regard* and relish *the things of God, but those of men*,[e] and losest thy zeal for the Divine glory, and the salvation of souls, in a mean solicitude for the enjoyments of this temporal life, and the grandeurs of an earthly kingdom, of which thou art vainly dreaming. SECT. LXXXIX. Mark VIII. 33.

34 And [then] when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them, [LUKE, all] Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, [LUKE, daily,] and follow me, [MAT. XVI. 24. LUKE IX. 23.]

Then having called the multitude, with his disciples, to him, he said unto them all, You must not only expect to see me suffer, but to share with me in my afflictions and sorrows, if ever you would hope to obtain a part in the glories of my kingdom: *if any one* therefore *is willing to come after me*, and to attend me as a faithful servant and disciple, *let him* learn to *deny himself* in the dearest pleasures and interests of this present life, *and* habituate himself *daily* to *take up his cross:* let him submit to whatsoever trial Providence may lay before him, *and* be ready to *follow me*, even to crucifixion itself; for till he is taught a readiness to meet death, even in that dreadful form, for my sake, he has attended my other instructions in vain. (Compare Mat. x. 38, p. 420.) 34

35 For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall [find *and*] save it. [MAT. XVI. 25. LUKE IX. 24.]

And it is well worth your while to submit even to this: *for whosoever will* attempt to *save his life* from persecution, by forsaking me and my gospel, *shall* find he has taken the surest way to *lose it;* as he will another day incur the sentence of the second death, and meet a far more dreadful punishment from God, as an apostate, than he could have borne from men as my servant: *but whosoever shall lose* or expose *his life for my sake and the gospel's, shall find* it with far greater advantage in the future state, [*and*] so shall have reason to acknowledge that he took the truest method to *save it*. (Compare Mat. x. 39, p. 420.) 35

36 For what shall

And therefore, on these principles it will be certainly your highest wisdom to forego the greatest advantages, or to bear the utmost extremities, rather than to forsake me: *for* it is a 36

[e] *Thou dost not regard* and relish *the things of God, &c.*] To *relish* or *savour* is plainly included; but I did not think it proper to limit it by such a version; for the word φρονεις often signifies *to fix a governing regard* on any thing, so as to make it the chief object of our pursuit; but I did not think which seems the plain sense of it here. Compare Rom. viii. 5; Phil. iii. 19, and Col. iii. 2.

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kind of proverb among you, *What would it profit a man, if he should gain the whole world, and be punished with the loss of his life?*[f] and so may

Mark VIII. 36 I say, what would all that gain, added to his present security, signify, if he thereby bring a sentence of death on his soul, [*and*] so *lose him-*

37 *self, or be* finally *cast away? Or what shall a man give as a ransom for his life?*[g] what gains would he not be willing to resign, to quit himself of that foolish bargain by which he had sold it? Yet in this case, what would be accepted as an equivalent for it? "Its redemption is pre-"cious, and it ceaseth for ever." (Psal xlix. 8.)

it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, [LUKE, *that is*, lose himself, or be cast away?] [MAT. XVI. 26.—LUKE IX. 25.]

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? [MAT. XVI.—26.]

38 Now assure yourselves, that this thought may with the utmost propriety be applied to the case before us: *for whosoever is ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation*, shall find, to his cost, that *of him also will the Son of man be ashamed*, and him will he with scorn disown, and with inexorable justice condemn, *when he comes in his own glory*, (that is, in all the pomp and grandeur in which he was of old represented to the prophets,) *and* shall appear upon his throne, invested with *the glory of his Father*,[h] as commissioned by him, to be the great executor of his judgment, as well as the

38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh, [in his own glory, and] in the glory of his Father, with

[f] *If he should gain the whole world, and be punished with the loss of his life?* και ζημιωθη την ψυχην αυτου.] Though the force of this maxim, taken by itself, appears best by rendering ψυχην *soul*, which it does undoubtedly on the whole signify here; yet as the same word had been rendered *life*, ver. 35, and its meaning is sufficiently plain from what follows, I thought it better to retain the same version here likewise; which, taken in its connection, has (as Dr. Tillotson observes, Vol. III. p. 528, 529.) an additional spirit, which consists in the application of a proverb relating to the *worth of life*; (compare Job ii. 4.) to the *soul*, which is in the highest sense *the life* of the man, or *the man himself*. Luke ix. 25.—Την ψυχην ζημιωθεσθαι does not merely signify *to lose the life*, which might be applied to a man who accidentally met death in the pursuit of gain (as a merchant who should be lost in his voyage;) but it properly imports *undergoing a capital execution*, which is an idea of much greater terror, as well as of much stricter propriety in the present case: and would to God it might seriously be considered in this awful view! See Raphel. Annot. ex Herod, p. 171.

[g] *As a ransom for his life.*] So the word ανταλλαγμα properly signifies; and in this connection leads us to reflect how willing a *condemned malefactor* would be to give all he had got by his crimes to *buy his pardon*, and how vain the attempt would in this case be.

[h] *In his own glory, and the glory of his Father.*] How these are distinguished, it is not easy to say. Mr. Bragge explains it of the *lustre of his own glorified body*, surrounded with such a *circle of fire* as that in which (according to him) *God the Father* had appeared particularly on *Mount Sinai*. (Bragge on the Parables, Vol. II. p. 181.) I think it sufficient to say, that besides the *glory* which the *human nature of Christ* habitually wears in heaven, some additional splendour shall now be given to him by the Father, when he sends him with *his commission* on so august an occasion as the *universal judgment*.

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the holy angels. [LUKE IX. 26.]

dispenser of his grace, attended *with* the bright retinue of *the holy angels*, who shall wait on him as his servants to grace the solemnity of that awful day. *For* you may certainly depend upon it, that howsoever he be now despised and rejected of men, there is a day appointed, when *the Son of man shall* thus *come in his Father's glory*, and be encircled in the most pompous manner *with his* holy *angels; and then shall he* convene the whole world before him, that he may determine the final happiness or misery of each, and *recompense every man according to his actions.*

MAT. XVI. 27. For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

Mat. XVI. 27

MARK IX. 1. And he said unto them, Verily, [LUKE, I tell you of a truth,] that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power, [*and* the Son of man coming in his kingdom.] [MAT. XVI. 28. LUKE IX. 27.]

And he said farther *to them, Verily, I tell* it *you as a* most certain *truth, that there are some of them who stand here* among us *that* shall live to see a most awful emblem of this important day: for some that now hear me *shall not taste of death*, that is, they shall not die, *till they have seen the kingdom of God come* to be established far and near, *with* a divinely efficacious *power; [and]* have beheld so eminent an appearance of Providence to promote the triumphs of my gospel, and to avenge the cruel injuries I shall receive from this ungrateful nation, that they may be said even to see *the Son of man coming in his kingdom*,[1] and leading on his victorious armies against those who would not admit him to reign over them.

Mark IX. 1

IMPROVEMENT.

ALAS, how prone are our foolish souls to *relish and regard the things of men rather than those of God!* How justly do we deserve the rebuke of our Lord, who, while he speaks to Peter with such abhorrence, after all the encomiums he had just been giv-

Mark VIII. 33

[1] *The Son of man coming in his kingdom.*] Raphelius (Annot. ex. Polyb. in loc.) and Albert. Observ. p. 113, 114) have indeed proved that ἐρχομαι is sometimes used for παρεχομαι, and ἐν for εἰς (compare John v. 4; and therefore they, with some other critics, would render this text, *Some here present shall not die, till they see the Son of man going into his kingdom*, that is, *ascending to heaven*, which the apostles did (see Acts i. 9.) But it increaseth the difficulty to suppose both these uncommon senses of the words in question to occur together; nor will Luke xxiii. 42, be allowed as an exact parallel. I choose therefore to adhere to our received version, which may include a reference to the *giving the spirit*, and *propagating the gospel*, but chiefly refers to that providential *appearance of Christ for the destruction of Jerusalem*, so often called *the coming of the Son of man*, (Mat. xxiv. 3, 27, 30, 37,) and *the day in which he shall be revealed.* (Luke xvii. 24, 26, 30.) This sense is the more natural here, especially as our Lord's manner of speaking intimates that most of the company should be *dead* before the event referred to; yet his *ascension* happened in a few months after this.

SECT. LXXXIX. ing him, shews us with what indignation we should reject every motion that would lead us to prefer our own ease or temporal interest, to the glory of God and the happiness of man.

Verse 36 We shall never act so mean a part, if we cordially digest the lessons which Christ hath here taught us, and consider of how much greater importance the *salvation of the soul* is, than the *gain of the whole world* when opposed to it. Let us steadily pursue this maxim of Divine wisdom, and with cheerfulness sacrifice every other interest to the views of an eternal felicity.

34 Does Jesus call us to deny ourselves for him? What difficulties should we not be ready to submit to, what pleasures should we not renounce for him, who *pleased not himself*, that he might shew his love to us; and *took upon him the form of a servant*, that he might *make us kings and priests unto God!*—Does he require us to *take up our cross and follow him?* What sufferings should we not be willing to endure for *him*; and whither should we not consent to follow *him*, who has *borne the cross for us*, and willingly expired on it for our sakes!

A sense of gratitude for past favours might bear us triumphantly through all the opposition we might be called to encounter in his cause; how much more then may we be animated by the pleasing hope that we shall another day be *confessed by Christ in the presence of his Father and of his holy angels*. Let us represent to ourselves that august *presence*, that awful *day*,

38 whenever a regard to *an adulterous and sinful generation* would

Mark IX. 1. lead us to *be ashamed of Christ and of his words*. So shall we certainly be brought to *see the kingdom of God in its glory*; and if it opens to us in the visions of the future state, we shall have no reason to be anxiously solicitous, though death should remove us from these lower regions before the gospel hath that universal triumph which the word of God encourages his church to expect.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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